

CHANDAMAMA

JUNE 1990

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Turn to page 13
for "THE BANDIT
PRINCE"





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I can easily find Rasna with my eyes closed.

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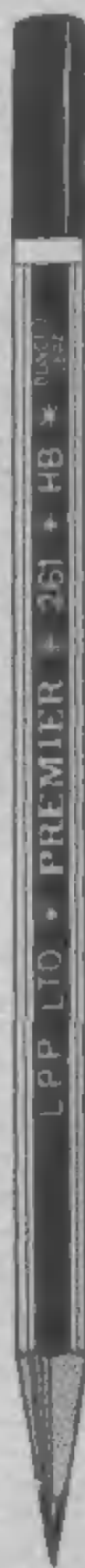
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CHANDAMAMA

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AN EXCITING ENCOUNTER: Vir Singh's soldiers, in a clever bid, surround the rebels and are about to destroy them. Can they be saved? Read in "The Bandit Prince".

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KICK THE HABIT OUT —ONCE FOR ALL

Nobody disputes the fact today that smoking is a suicidal habit. It claims not only money, but also years of the smoker's life. That is not the end of it. For the so-called pleasure it gives—if at all you call it a pleasure, it gives a thousand times greater pain afterwards, by creating disorder in the lungs, breathing system, etc.

Smokers argue that tension and fast life-style inspire them to smoke. This is a false argument. See the *Newsflash* in this issue. More and more people in the USA which has the fastest life-style, are giving up the habit. The irony is, more cigarettes are exported by the same USA to other countries! That is commerce!

It is good that our government is planning to ban smoking in the dispensaries, hospitals, schools, colleges, planes and airconditioned coaches of all the trains. Everybody should help the drive. The teachers should be the first to give up smoking altogether to set examples before their students.



POLITICAL SPRING IN THE HIMALAYAN KINGDOM

Along the southern slope of the Himalayas nestles the kingdom of Nepal. Its capital is Kathmandu and it has a population little less than one and half crores.

Nepal runs along India's northern frontier with the river Sutlej in the West and Sikkim in the East.

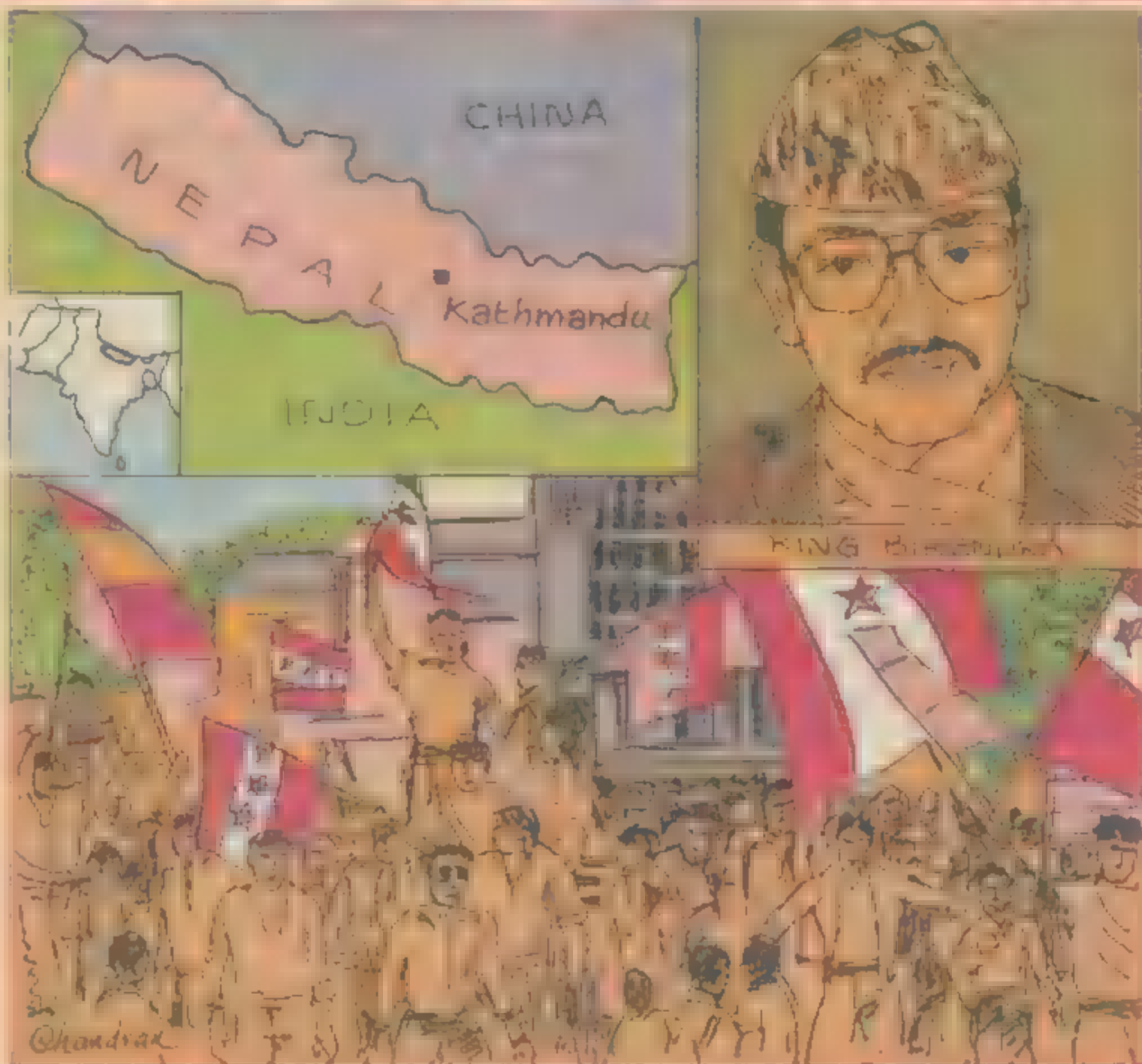
Nepal, the people of which are mostly Hindus and Buddhists, has far greater affinity and intimacy with India than with its other big neighbour, China. Several times in history, it had been a part of the empire of mighty Indian monarchs such as Asoka and Samudragupta.

From 1846 till 1951, Nepal was ruled not by its kings, but its

hereditary prime ministers known as the Ranas.

In 1951 there was a popular uprising against the Ranas. The king got back his lost power. But the people have always demanded a democratic form of government. From time to time, elected ministries have been established, but they have not lasted. The king had always had the last word. In 1961 the late King Mahendra introduced a system of non-party Assembly (Rashtriya Panchayat). But this hardly voiced the sentiments and problems of the people. The Nepalese demanded party system and free elections. In many ways they kept on protesting against the absolute monarchy as well as the ineffective non-party Assembly system.





King Mahendra died in 1972 and his son Birendra ascended the throne. He at last agreed to grant what the people demanded.

It was wise of the king to do so. Soon he may become a figure-head, like the Queen of Britain. But much would depend on how

well the people of Nepal can make use of their new rights, how wisely their leaders can guide them. At the moment the people are rejoicing at their victory. Their leaders are generous enough to give some credit to the king for his sensible conduct.

STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN IN A STRANGE LAND

n days gone by there was an old couple in Greece. Once the husband and wife decided to go out on a pilgrimage. Instead of carrying in cash ■ the money they would need for the journey, they carried with them a cow.

Whatever cash they had with them was finished when they were returning home, after they had seen the holy place. They camped in a village, taking on rent a house adjacent to a church. It was ■ nice place and they decided to stay on for a week. They were not in a hurry for anything.

On the third day the husband told his wife, "There is ■ market two miles to the east of this village. I should lead the cow there for selling it. But I am tired. Wake me up after ■ hour."

"My husband, relax. Let me go and sell the cow," proposed the lady.

"If you so please," agreed the husband.

The lady led the cow towards the market. Now, it so happened that there ■ a young loafer in the village. He was ■ wealthy

man's son and he did nothing except idling away his time or playing tricks on innocent people. Lately two of his friends from the town had come to his house to spend ■ holiday. Together, the three had become a menace for the people of the locality.

They knew that ■ couple had come to live in the village and they were waiting for a chance to swindle them. As soon as they saw the lady out with the cow, one of them came and greeted her and asked politely, "Granny, where are you going?"

"To the market, my child, to sell this cow," answered the lady.

"Granny, why do you call ■ goat ■ cow? If you are willing to sell it for three silver coins, I am ready to buy it," said the young man.

"Thank you, son, but this is a cow and it should fetch me much more," said the lady as she marched on with her cow.

Five minutes later, the second loafer met her and said, "Granny, are you by any chance heading towards the market for selling

your goat? I am in need of one rather urgently and I can give you two silver coins for it. I bet, you cannot get a higher price for it in the market!"

"My son, this is not a goat, but a cow," she said and proceeded on her way without wasting a word more.

She had walked a furlong when the third loafer met her. "Granny, must you walk up to the market for selling your goat? Why not sell it to me for a silver coin?"

Now, the lady was really bewildered. "Perhaps the people of this land call the cow the goat. They must be having some other name for the cow. That does not matter. But must the value of my animal come down at this rate as I come nearer the market?" she wondered. Then she decided to take no more chances. "My son, I am ready to sell my cow for five silver coins and I don't care if you call it a goat or a lamb!" said the lady.

"No goat has ever fetched a price higher than three silver coins!" said the third loafer. The lady felt obliged to sell it at that price and returned home.

But she looked sad. When her husband heard the story, he



understood that she had been deceived in a planned way. Meanwhile he had struck friendship with the landlord of the village who was a very influential man. He narrated his wife's experience to the landlord who at once knew who the swindlers were. "Landlord, sir, I can outwit the loafers, if you do not take me to task!" said the pilgrim.

"Take you to task? Well, I should thank you if you can teach the three loafers a lesson!" said the landlord.

"Tomorrow make bread for three guests. Prepare egg curry and sweetened cream too," the pilgrim told his wife.

Next day he bought two rabbits and kept one in his lodge and with the other one, slowly walked towards the lake outside the village. Soon he attracted the attention of the three loafers. They came near him and greeted him and asked, "Gentleman, why are you carrying a rabbit?"

"Friends, this is a very special rabbit. Since you are curious, I must tell you that this is the only rabbit in the world which can carry its owner's message anywhere," said the pilgrim.

"Really? We cannot believe it!" said the young men.

"You are free not to believe it. That does not harm me in any way. Well, I am going to send a message to my wife now!" said the pilgrim. He then lifted the rabbit and said, "Go and tell her that we should have bread, egg-curry and sweetened cream for our lunch!"

As he was about to leave the rabbit, the loafers asked him, "How to know that it would deliver the message?"

"It is not for you to know it! However, if you are so curious, you can join me for lunch!" said the pilgrim and he told the rabbit, "Ask her to prepare enough food for three guests who would be

coming with me!"

Then he let go the rabbit. It disappeared from their sight in the twinkling of an eye.

The old man kept the three loafers engaged for an hour with fantastic tales about the rabbit. "The magistrate of my district offered me five thousand silver coins. But I refused to sell it. The governor of my province offered eight thousand. I was not lured by it. I know the king will give me no less than twenty thousand silver coins for this. I am waiting for a chance to meet him," he said.

The three loafers accompanied the pilgrim to his lodge. They were surprised to see the items the old man had ordered to be made laid out on the table! The pilgrim brought out the second rabbit he had kept at home and patted it.

The three loafers talked among themselves in whispers. They must buy the rabbit and sell it at a greater profit to the king! The old man pretended not to hear them. At last they said, "Sir, we have a request. Kindly sell your wonderful rabbit to us. You know, it would not be easy for you to go to the capital and meet the king. We are young and we can do so at an

opportune moment. You should not grudge us a little profit! Well, we offer you ten thousand silver coins!"

"Excuse me, my young friends, I cannot oblige you," said the pilgrim.

But when the young men kept pleading with him, his wife intervened and said, "My husband, you should not disappoint such lovely, innocent boys. Let them have the rabbit. Also, as you know, strange things happen in this strange land. The other day a cow of ours turned into a goat. Who knows when..."

The husband thought for a moment and then agreed to part with his rabbit for a sum of ten thousand silver coins which the loafers arranged with great difficulty before sunset.

The three excited young men went to the square and each one

gave a separate order to the rabbit and released it. The little creature ran away at great speed.

After a while the three loafers reached home. But where was the rabbit? They looked for it everywhere. No, it had not come; it had brought no message to anybody!

They ran to the pilgrim and reported about the missing rabbit. "What is to be done now?" they asked anxiously.

"Nothing. Strange things happen in this strange land. Our cow became a goat. Your rabbit has become thin air. That is all!" said the pilgrim.

As they were arguing, the landlord reached there. The three loafers feared him very much. They took to their heels. The pilgrim and his wife, escorted by the landlord's guards, left for their village the next day—making a handsome gain on the way!



“NO VACANCY”

One day a young man met the manager of the Jai Bharat Press in our small town. After greeting him very politely, he asked him, “Sir, do you need an assistant manager?”

“No, thanks,” said the manager.

“Do you need an accountant, sir?”

“No, we have a very efficient accountant. Thanks.”

“I thought so. Do you by any chance need a machine-man?” persisted the young man.

“Oh no. We have all the three machine-men we need.”

“I thought so. And what about a proof-reader?”

“We have a very experienced proof-reader,” replied the manager, beginning to grow impatient.

“And, surely you have all the compositors you need!”

“We have, young man, we have! We won’t be needing you for any of these jobs!” The manager sounded a bit rude.

“I thought so,” said the young man.

“If you thought so much, why were you asking me all these questions?” asked the manager.

“In fact I sell different kinds of signboards. Is it not high time you buy one reading ‘NO VACANCY?’” said the young man very affably, bringing out from his bag an elegant plastic signboard with this legend.





A CURSE BETWEEN PARROTS

Kumari's father was ill. He was in the hospital. Her mother had to stay with him to look after his needs. Their neighbour, Sarala, volunteered to take charge of Kumari.

But it was not neighbourly love that had prompted Sarala to bring Kumari home. She had a selfish desire. She wanted to make Kumari work hard. The girl had to cook, wash the utensils, water her kitchen-garden and wash clothes. The old Sarala would go over to her friends to spend time gossiping. Poor Kumari had nowhere else to go. She had to bear with the hardship till her loving parents returned.

But left at her work alone, she often gave vent to her anger by muttering, "Why don't you die, you wretched old hag!"

A month passed. Kumari's father fully recovered. Both the

parents were back and Kumari happily left Sarala's house.

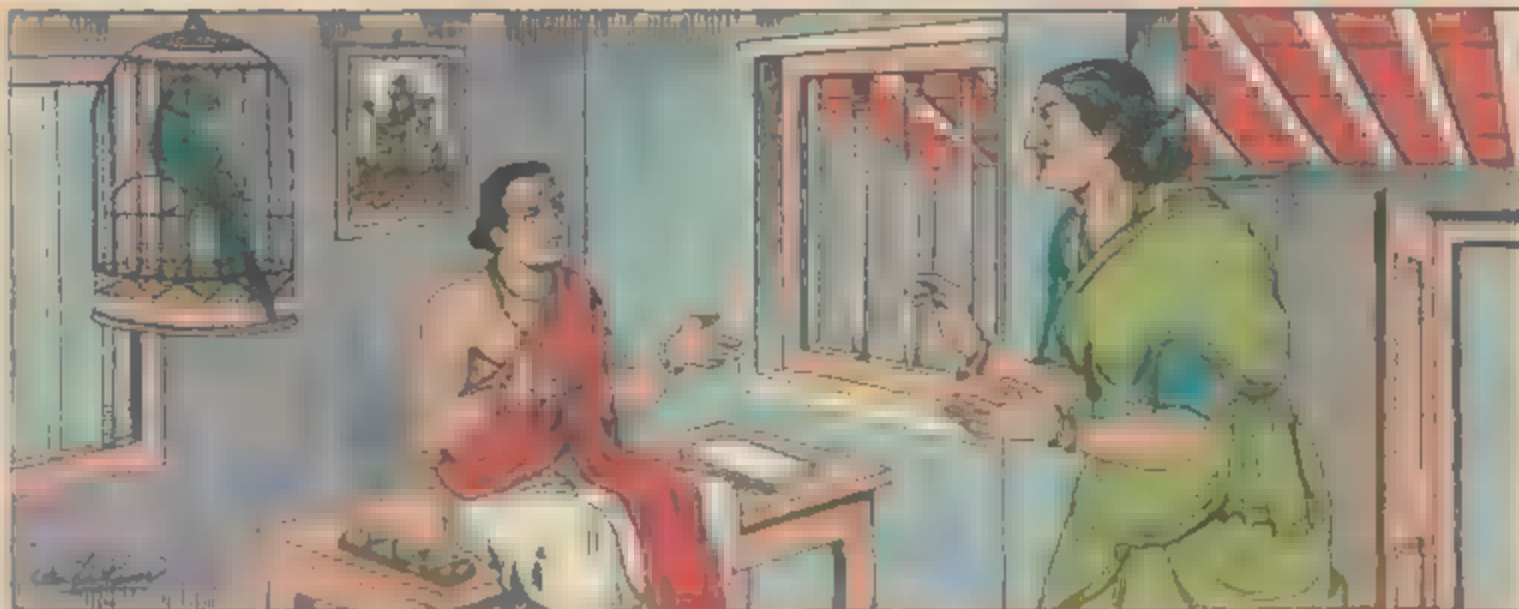
Sarala's aunt, a wealthy old lady, visited Sarala's house. She had just taken seat when Sarala's pet parrot spoke out, "Why don't you die, you wretched old hag!"

Sarala's aunt was very haughty by nature. "So, this is how you welcome your venerable aunt! I had decided to bestow some handsome gifts on you. But let them remain with me!"

The aunt left Sarala's house in a huff.

Sarala was very upset. She could guess how her parrot had learnt the curse. She could not take Kumari to task because she, along with her parents, had left the town. What is to be done?

There was a pious scholar in the neighbourhood who too had a parrot. Sarala narrated to him the problem she was having with



her parrot. The scholar and his wife were planning a visit to a relative's house. They would be away for five days and they were wondering who would look after their pet. Said the scholar, "The easy way to make your parrot forget what it has learnt is to keep my parrot near it for a few days. Your parrot would learn new phrases from our parrot."

Sarala happily took the scholar's parrot home. As soon as her parrot saw the new one, it said, "Why don't you die, you wretched old hag?"

The scholar's parrot immediately said in Sanskrit *Tathastu*, meaning, "Let it be so!"

And the two parrots continued the dialogue most enthusiastically. Disgusted, Sarala at last released her own parrot from her cage. It flew away happily. She returned the scholar's parrot when he was back from his outing.

When Kumari heard this, she laughed and said, "I had a hard time with her, no doubt, but I am happy that the parrot won its freedom!"

A little nonsense now and then
Is relished by the wisest men.

—Anonymous



THE BANDIT PRINCE

10

(Vir Singh's ambitious expedition against Amritpur ended in a fiasco because of a sudden flood in the river. He planned to raise a new army. He also wanted to buy arms from Chandralal in exchange for the rice produced in his own kingdom. But there was resistance from a group of rebels.)

Year after year the season of spring changed the forest into a blissful paradise. Waves of colour rolled over the trees, in the form of flowers. The cuckoos kept on cooing and the other birds would not like to fall behind!

A new charm had been added to the spring since the little

prince's arrival in the forest. The prince was now aged six and the hermit, Jayananda, named him Sandip. As the readers know, the hermit had a strange power over the birds and beasts. He rarely made use of this special power and very few people knew that he had this power. However, by and by he began to pass on his power

AN UNEXPECTED ARROW



to the little Sandip. In ■ most natural way Sandip could deal with the wild creatures of the forest as if they were his human playmates.

There was a lovely elephant named Bhola. It was ■ huge tusker. No doubt, it was the leader of all the elephants in the forest. Bhola, the grand tusker, made it ■ point to meet Sandip at least once every day. If Sandip was in ■ mood for a ride and would raise his arms, Bhola would gently lift him by its trunk and place him on its back. Often one of the genial monkeys sat near Sandip, supporting him. Malli, the hermit's parrot, kept

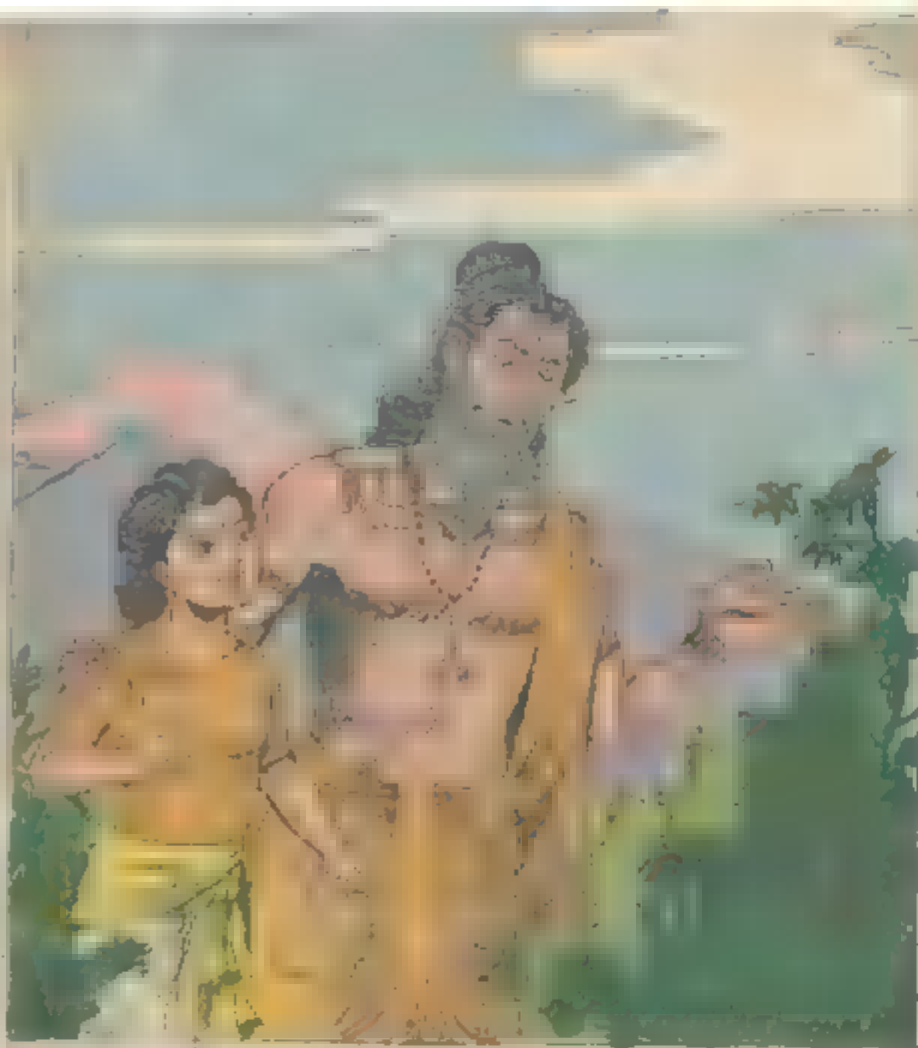
flying from tree to tree, keeping ■ track of the elephant's movements.

Bhalooki, the she-bear who had been almost like a guardian of the boy since the very day of his arrival in the forest, would dig out different kinds of sweet roots and bring them to Sandip. Sometimes she brought for him the sweetest sugar-canes from the farms just outside the forest. And so far as the monkeys were concerned, they vied with one another in fetching excellent guavas and other fruits for their human friend.

Sandip was never tired of playing hide-and-seek with the tiger-cubs. It was not an unusual sight to see him rolling on the soft grass, locked in embrace with a baby tiger or wrestling with it.

In the morning, after taking his bath, Sandip sat with the hermit who taught him prayers and meditation. The hermit also showed him how to read and write. They would walk together in the forest and the hermit would show him the different trees, plants and creepers and tell him their names and all about their qualities. "My child, we must respect this beautiful Nature. It was there long long





before man was created. Don't the trees perform miracles every moment? Look here, how the champak tree creates one kind of colour and fragrance for its flower while the jasmine produces a different colour and fragrance—from the same earth and water and air and the same sunlight. What is more wonderful than this? One tree produces the mango and another produces the jackfruit—again from the same elements. What is greater miracle than this?"

Sandip would listen to the hermit with rapt attention. He would begin to find a new joy in

the green world around him.

"And, my boy, have you ever wondered about the fact that these trees give us so much but in return expect nothing from us? You pluck a ripe guava or a mango, but the guava tree or the mango tree does not ask you to give it anything in lieu of its gift. Its happiness lies in giving and giving—in making us happy. Only if we could imbibe this quality from Nature!" the hermit would say again.

In the evening the hermit would lead the boy to the top of a hill. As the stars would begin to twinkle, he would teach Sandip not only their names, but also the legends behind them.

This is how the little prince continued to grow up in the forest, far from the crowds in the capital. From the many stories the hermit narrated to him—the stories of Rama, Krishna, Dhruva and Nachiketa, the little prince knew that every child had a father and a mother. He asked the hermit, "Who is my father and who is my mother?"

"My boy, why does a child need a father and mother? It is to enjoy God's love which comes to the child through them. You are a special child. You should be able

to receive God's love directly, without any agency," the hermit told him affectionately.

Sandip nodded and smiled. "But I too have the agencies through which God's love comes to me! You are my father and Nature is my mother!" said Sandip. The hermit laughed. "My boy, you are wise. I bless you so that you are able to feel God's love in everything around you!"

* * *

"Kapalchand!" shouted Vir Singh. "What is this I hear again and again? Who are these audacious fellows to plunder our men?"

Vir Singh sat in the court, trembling with rage. He had just received the news that once again his sepoys, while forcibly taking away cart-loads of rice from some farmers, had been surrounded by a gang of youths who snatched the rice from them.

"We must capture these plunderers, we must destroy the gang, we must punish with death whoever helps them!" yelled Vir Singh at the top of his voice.

Suddenly, through a window on the court, an arrow came shooting in. Its end was blunt; a kerchief was tied to it. Such



arrows were not meant to harm anybody. Generally they brought some message.

The arrow hit the opposite wall and fell down. Vir Singh stood up, startled. Everybody else too stood up. Kapalchand was going to pick up the arrow.

"Don't be a fool!" shouted Vir Singh.

Kapalchand stopped, feeling awfully bad. It was not a compliment for a general to be called a fool—that too before the full court!

"First run and see who shot the arrow, who could do so, coming so close to the palace! Capture him if he is not already captured

by our guards! Run, run!" commanded Vir Singh.

Kapalchand hurriedly went out of the court. Some other officers also followed him.

"Now, let us see what is tied to the arrow!" said Vir Singh.

Vir Singh's chief bodyguard picked up the arrow and untied the kerchief from its end. Inside was a blade of palm-leaf. It read, "We are not plundering your men. The fact is, you are plundering the people of their hard-earned rice, in order to get arms. The people live on rice, not on arms. That is why the people are trying to recover what you have plundered!"

There was a total silence for a moment. Vir Singh kept gazing at the main door, expecting to see Kapalchand returning, dragging with him the man who had shot the arrow. But minutes passed. Kapalchand was not to be seen. Vir Singh's face looked like that of a demon, distorted with terrible anger. He said, "Somebody must have scribbled these words after I had said that our men are being plundered! That means, there was an enemy spy in the court who heard me and reported it to someone else or himself wrote it down and shot the message in. This is most unexpected! This is dangerous! Kill





the fellow, put him to death immediately! No, no, wait! Don't kill him. We must extract the secrets of his gang from him!"

Vir Singh's mad shouting stopped when he found Kapalchand and others who had gone out looking for the archer, coming in.

"Where is the rogue? Did you kill him?" asked Vir Singh.

"No, my lord, the rogue escaped. One of the guards saw him when he was taking aim at the window. The guard ran to capture him, but he mounted his horse and galloped away."

"Galoped away? How? Did we not have any horse?" demanded Vir Singh.

"By the time the guard went into the stables and took a horse and rode after the rogue, he had disappeared!" reported Kapalchand.

"Put the guard to death—and wait—put also the horse to death!" hollered Vir Singh.

In the eerie silence that followed, the courtiers looked at one another meaningfully. Had Vir Singh gone crazy? Some of them thought so, no doubt!

—To continue

Blessed be he who expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointment.

—Pope

THE GATEWAY TO HEAVEN

When Rajesh proposed to marry Kusum, his mother, Sumatibai, opposed the proposal. However, she did not succeed in stopping Kusum coming to her household as her daughter-in-law.

"Welcome, my child! Now that you have come, I can fulfil my greatest desire in life," Sumatibai said while receiving Kusum.

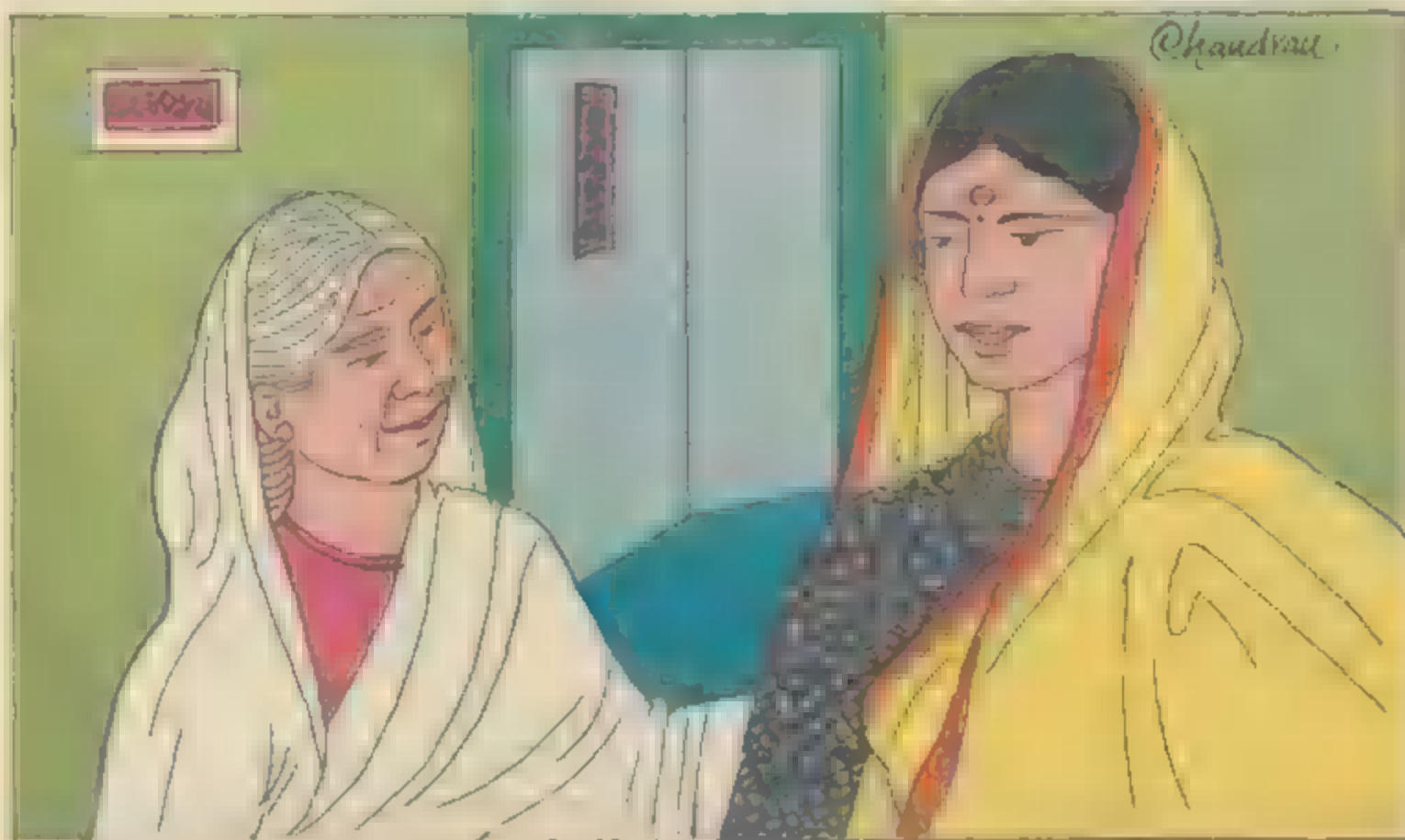
"What is that desire, mother?" asked Kusum in great earnest.

"To go away to heaven, of course!" replied Sumatibai.

"Mother, I have heard that people who die at Kasi go to heaven straight. If you are so particular about heaven, why not live in Kasi?" proposed Kusum.

"My child, it is very kind of you to think of sending me to heaven in an easy way. I will take your advice," said Sumatibai.

Kusum was delighted. She knew very well that Sumatibai disliked her. It would be wonderful to run the household without the old lady finding fault with her every moment.



Days passed. Sumatibai appeared more interested in taking her daughter-in-law to task for one lapse or another than going over to Kasi.

"Mother, when do you think your son should arrange for your stay in Kasi so that you can have an easy entry into heaven?" one day Kusum asked Sumatibai.

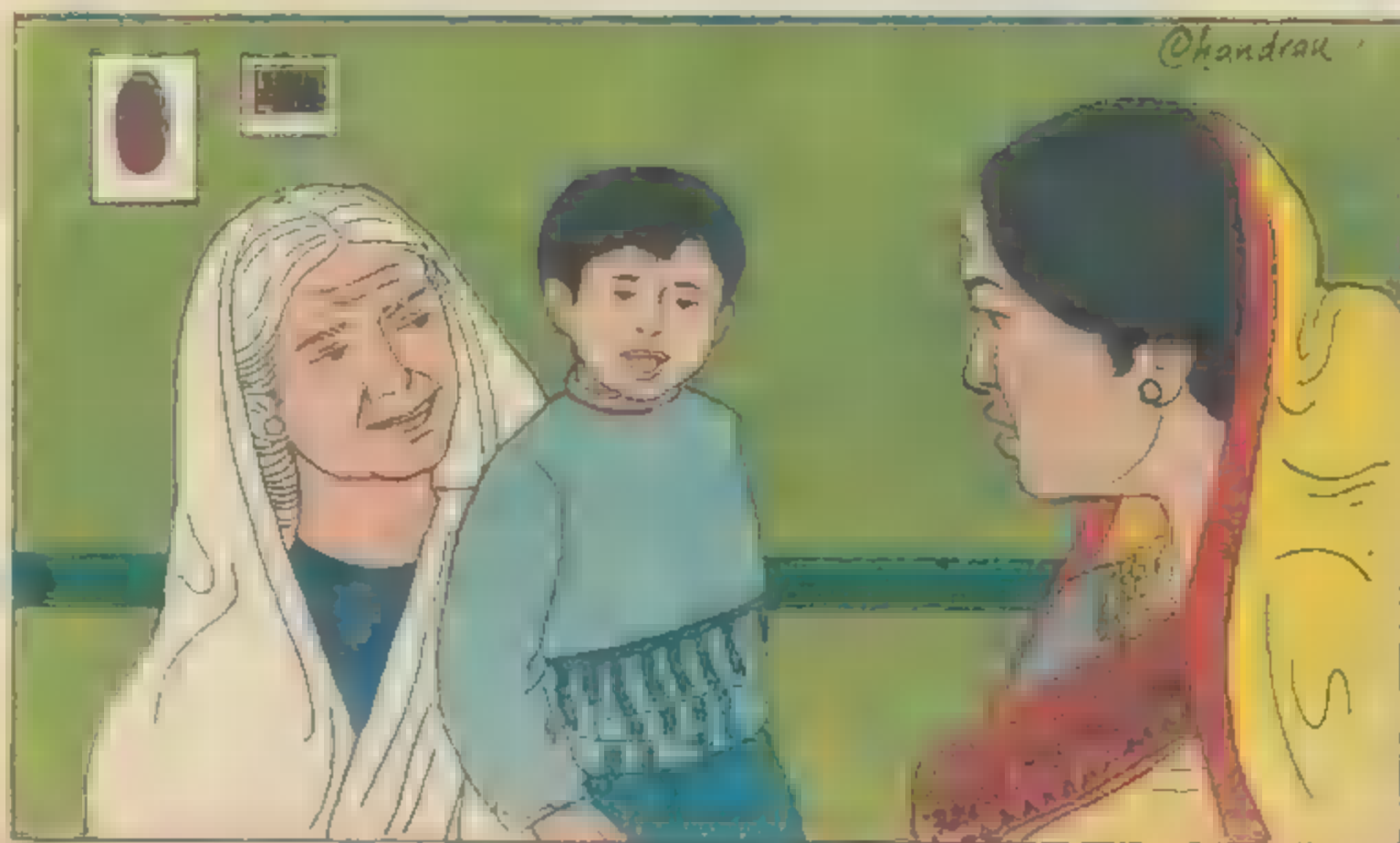
"After I have tasted heaven in life, of course!" said Sumatibai.

As Kusum did not understand it, Sumatibai explained, "Once you give birth to a child, I will have a touch of heaven on earth by looking at it! Then I can go over to Kasi."

Kusum was consoled, for she was to become a mother before long.

When Kusum gave birth to a son, Sumatibai began taking her to task more vigorously for her negligence in several duties concerning the child. Kusum bore with everything in the hope that Sumatibai would soon go over to Kasi.

A long time passed. Kusum was about to remind her mother-in-law about her sojourn in Kasi when Sumatibai herself said, while playing with the child, "Now I have got a taste of heaven. Once the boy goes to the



school, I will be almost at the gateway of heaven. Then I would go over to Kasi and die there for an easy passage into heaven."

Kusum sighed and decided to wait till the boy went to school. At last the day came when the boy began attending the school. She asked Sumatibai, "Should I now ask your son to find a lodge for you in Kasi?"

"What is the hurry, daughter? Let ■■■ have a second taste of heaven on earth!" said Sumatibai.

"Second taste of heaven? What is that, mother?" asked Kusum.

"Don't you know? To see a grandson bring home a bride is the second taste of heaven for a grandmother. Once my grandson has done that, I would go away—to Kasi. By the way, Kusum, ask

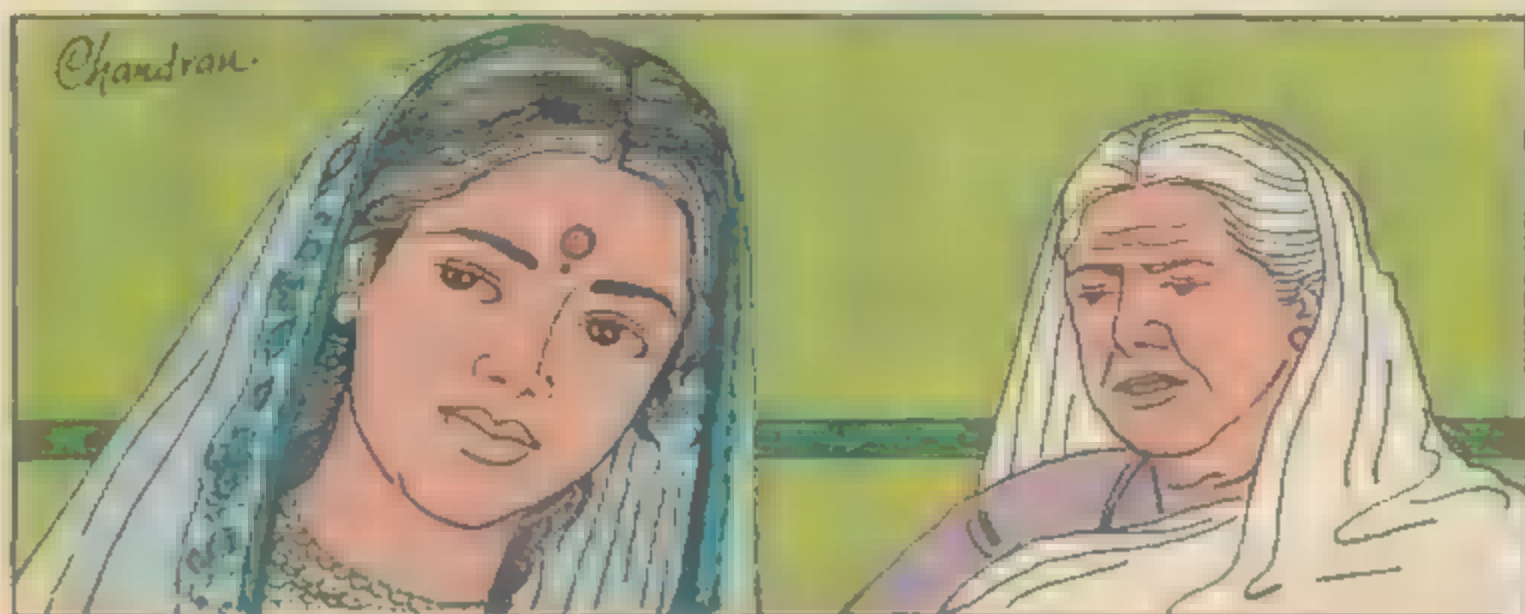
your husband to locate a lodge to accommodate both of us," said Sumatibai.

"Both of us?" asked Kusum, feeling rather shocked.

"Right. Don't you remember how eagerly you proposed that I go over to Kasi as soon as I became a mother-in-law? I could not accept the offer. But should I not see to it that you at least get that chance? Besides, by serving me in my extreme old age in Kasi, you would not only go to heaven, but would find a fine place there! Should I not bring you that much good luck in return for your kind thoughts about me?" observed Sumatibai.

Kusum never brought up the issue of Sumatibai going to Kasi again.

—Retold by P. Raja





TWO ORDINARY QUESTIONS

King Shesadev of Kirtipur was known for his love of scholarship. His court was adorned by a number of gifted scholars. He patronised poets and pundits.

One day a scholar named Sanjay Sharma arrived in his court. His fame had already reached the king beforehand. The king received him respectfully and said, "Tell me, O savant, if you will like to give a discourse on any topic, so that we can enrich our knowledge."

"I can give any number of discourses on any number of topics, but first I must challenge your court-scholars to a contest in knowledge. That is what I have been doing in different courts. Nobody has been able to defeat me so far. If I win a victory over the scholars here, I will be crowned by my own king as the

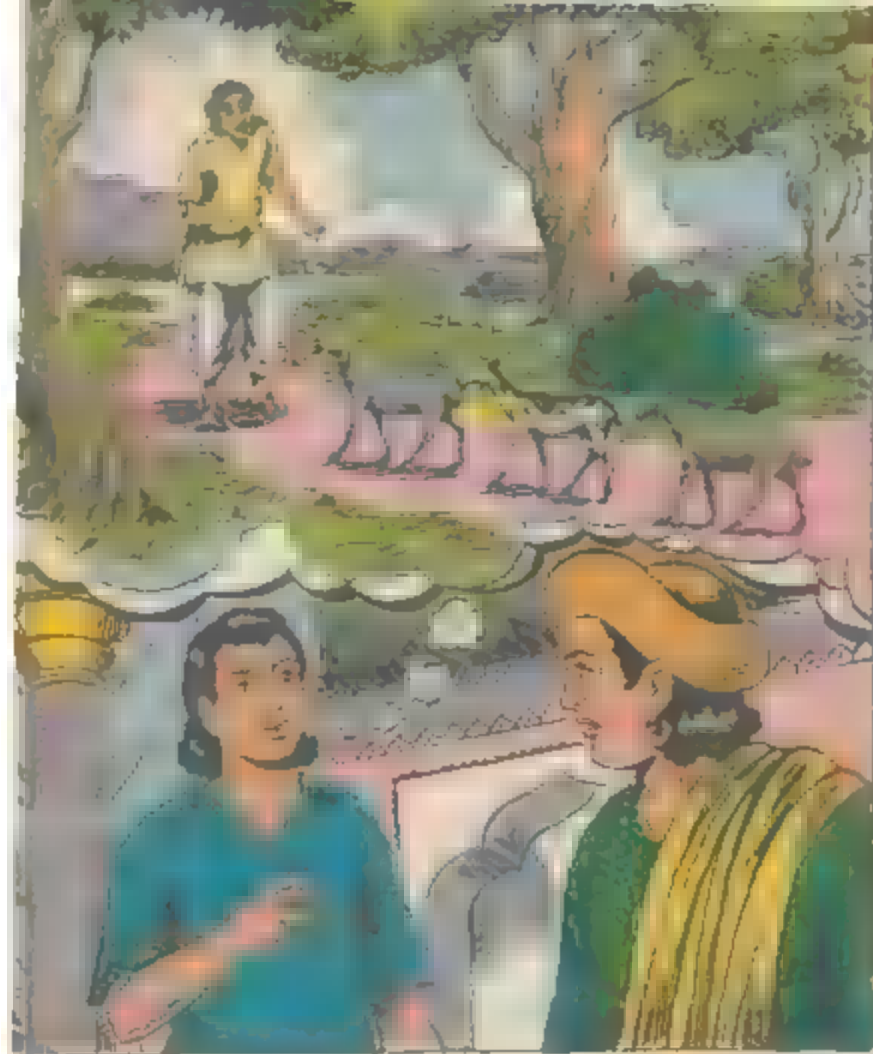
greatest scholar in India. I will be called Brihaspasti, the guru of the gods!" said Sharma.

The king did not like such contests. At the same time he could not have refused the proposal. He said, "All right, Sharmaji, you can put questions to the scholars who are in my court."

"First let them put questions to me," proposed Sharma.

Accordingly the court-scholars began asking him questions. Their questions were straight and were meant for eliciting wise answers. Sharma had answered such questions so many times in so many courts or conferences. He had got the answers by heart. He poured them out.

Then it was his turn to put questions to the court-scholars. The questions he chose to ask were complex and clever. He had



framed them in order to put the others to awkward situations. The court-scholars too could have put questions of this nature to him, but they had not done so. Now it was too late for them to corner the visitor.

As they could not answer Sharma's questions, King She-sadev announced that Sharma had emerged victorious. "We will not only give you rewards, but also arrange a reception for you," he said.

"My lord, I will thankfully accept the rewards, but I am tired of receptions and ovations and congratulations. I want to go back with a different kind of

satisfaction," said Sharma.

"What would please you?" asked the king.

"Let all the defeated scholars touch my feet," said Sharma.

The king realised that Sharma had grown very proud. He was thinking of a fitting reply to the fellow's audacious proposal when a young man stood up and said, "Sharmaji, I do not know whether the king would be pleased to fulfil your desire or not. But to me it sounds ridiculous!"

The king recognised the young man. He was the son of a nobleman. At the death of his father, he had lately become a courtier. But he always kept quiet and dressed simply. That is why the king had hardly taken note of him.

The young man's remark angered Sharma. "What is ridiculous in it? Is it not quite common for seekers to touch the feet of one who is superior to them in wit and wisdom?" he demanded.

"Sharmaji, maybe you are superior in knowledge. You might have studied more than our scholars have or perhaps you are more well-versed in philosophical dialogues than they are.

But you are not superior to them in wit or wisdom!" commented the young man.

"How dare you say so?" shrieked out Sharma. "Can you prove what you say?"

"I will try to prove it. If I fail, I will touch your feet. If I succeed, you will simply concede defeat; you will not be required to pay any penalty for it!" said the young man.

"Come out with your questions! Only two of them," Sharma commanded impatiently.

"Here is my first question. Three goats were going in a straight line. A traveller asked the first goat: how many goats are following you? The first goat answered that two goats were following it. When the traveller put the same question to the second goat, it too said that two goats were following it. How could the second goat say so?" asked the young man.

"The goats must be moving in a circle!" replied Sharma.

"No. Did I not say that they were going in a straight line?" reminded the young man.

Sharma scratched his head and then said, "Well, I cannot answer this question. Will you please say how could the second goat give



such an answer?"

"Because it was a liar!" said the young man.

The king and the courtiers could not check their laughter.

"All right. What is the second question?" asked Sharma in a huff.

"Here it is, Sharmaji. A gentleman began his journey from the top of a rock. After walking exactly three miles towards the east, he took a turn to the right and walked for another two miles. Then he took yet another turn to the left and walked another mile and stopped. Why did he stop?"

"There must have been a river



or the sea before him!" said Sharma.

"No, sir, there was neither a river nor the sea. Even then he stopped."

"He must have been tired!"

"No, sir, he was not tired. He could have walked even ten miles more!"

Sharma could not think of any

other possibility. He said at last, "Well, what is the answer?"

"The gentleman had reached his destination, that is all!" answered the young man.

Everybody laughed again. Sharma left the court immediately. Never thereafter he was seen challenging anybody to any contest!

WHAT WE DO WITHOUT KNOWING

This is what an average adult does

His heart beats 103,689 times

His blood travels 165,000,000 miles

He breathes 23,040 times

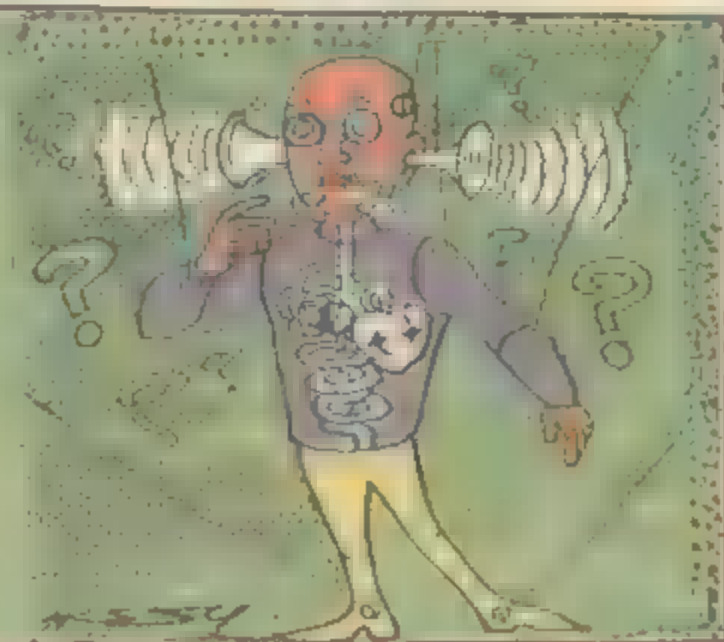
He inhales 438 cubic feet of air.

He moves 750 muscles.

His nails grow 0.00046 inch.

His hair grows .01714 inch

He exercises 7,000,000 brain cells.



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-20

TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE

WHO IS HE?

That was the time of the famous Sepoy Mutiny — India's first War of Independence. The Raja of a small state became one of the leaders in the revolt against the British. His state was attacked by the army of the East India Company when he was away, fighting the British in other fronts. When he heard of the attack, he decided to return home. The British army tried its best to check him. But he fought bravely and marched on. A bullet from the enemy wounded him in his right wrist. The wound grew serious. It was obvious that unless his right hand was amputated, there was no chance for his survival.

There was no time to call a surgeon. Holding a sword in his left hand, he stood on the bank of the Ganga. "Mother! Take this as an offering!" he said, chopping his right hand himself!

Had he been younger, he would have survived this strange operation. But he was seventy-five. He died the next day.

Who  he?

DO YOU KNOW?

1. What is Baha'i Faith?
2. Where in India is to be found a great Baha'i temple?
3. Who was the first man to see what is known as the "Flying Saucers"?
4. When did he see them?
5. Why are the objects called "Flying Saucers"?

KAMARUPA AND ITS CAPITAL

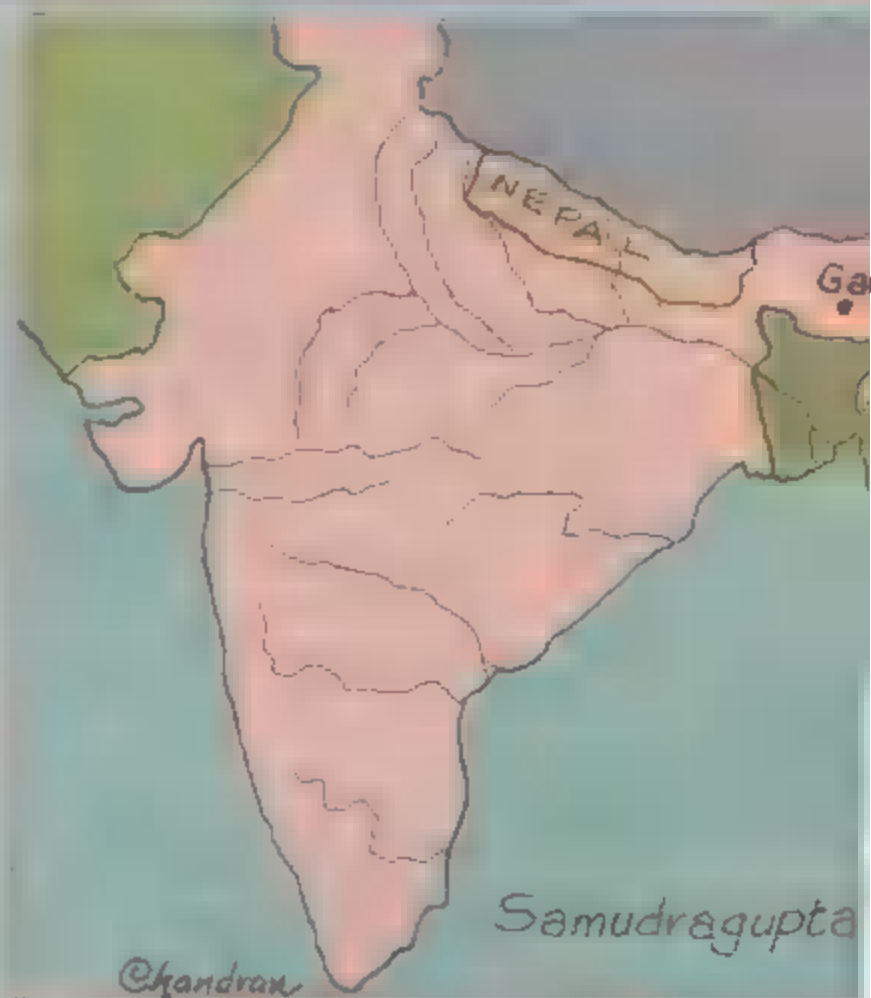
One of the ancient Indian kingdoms the name of which is found in the Puranas is Kamarupa — with its capital known as Prag-yotishapura. Both the names are Significant. Kamarupa means the land where one can have what one desires. According to another legend, Kama, the god of Love, was once reduced to ashes by Lord Shiva. Afterwards, however, Shiva revived Kama. The place where Kama got back his *Rupa* or form came to be known as Kamarupa.

Pragyotishapura means the Light of the East.

Can you guess which part of modern India was known as Kamarupa? We can give you a clue. The presiding deity of Kamarupa is Kamaksha— whose shrine stands on a hill close to the old Prag-yotishapura.

Well, the modern Assam was the Kamarupa of yesterday. And Prag-yotishapura is no other place than Gauhati.

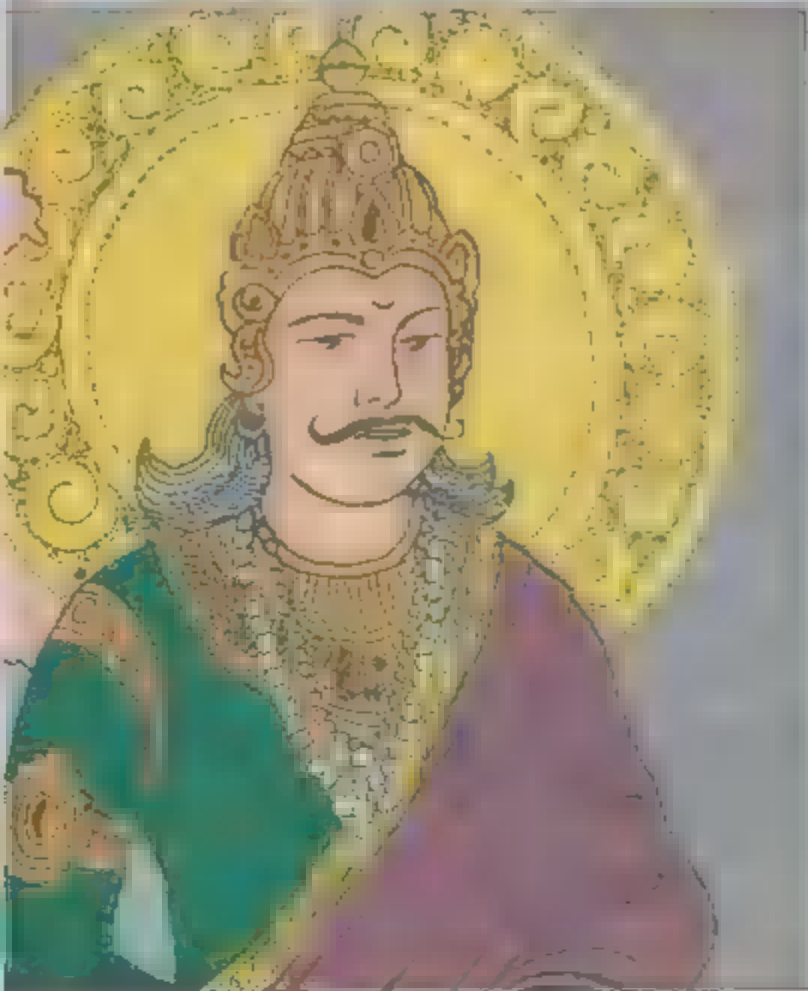
The most famous among the



Digging for the Dinosaur

For more than a century, scientists have been digging into a vast dinosaur graveyard in the Rocky mountains in Denver, unravelling the mysteries of the largest creatures ever to roam the planet. Here lie the fossilized bones of dinosaurs that lived 140 million years ago, before these spectacular mountains rose from a semi-arid lowland.

Dozens of new items have been recently discovered there. They will tell us more about our huge, giant-like ancestors!



Cigarette Smoking in US Drops

Cigarette use in ■ United States dropped five per cent last year, the largest decline in six years.

Overall, American smokers consumed about 533 billion cigarettes in 1989. ■ economic research service ■ in a report.

Annual use ■ cigarettes by ■ US adult population dropped seven per cent.



legendary Kings of Kamarupa was Narakasura, who came from Mithila to settle down there. His son, Bhagadatta, fought in the Mahabharata War on the side of the Kauravas and was killed. The King with whom the historic period began was Pushyavarman, a descendant of the same dynasty. He ruled Kamarupa in the A.D. fourth century, and accepted the imperial supremacy of Samudragupta.

The land assumed the name Assam only in the A.D. 13th century, after the Ahoms, a people of Shan tribe of upper Burma, occupied a great part of the land. Another opinion on the name is, it means unequal terrains. The British conquered the land in 1824.

The Ahom kings gave up their Shan identity and became Hindus and assumed Sanskrit names. They were brave rulers who could check the attempts for conquest by Muslims, Pathans and Mughals. The Ahoms are now a small minority among the Assamese who are a mixed population.

The modern Assam has an area of 78, 523 sq. kms. Its new capital is Dispur, near Gauhati.

LET US EXPLORE THE WORLD OF LITERATURE

1. Who is the first notable English novelist?
2. What is the name of his great work?
3. What is the basis of his work?
4. Who was the model for the hero of the novel?
5. Who are the noted Indian novelists who wrote in English and died at the age of 24?

WHO IS HE?

Raja Kumar Singh ■ Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur in Bihar.

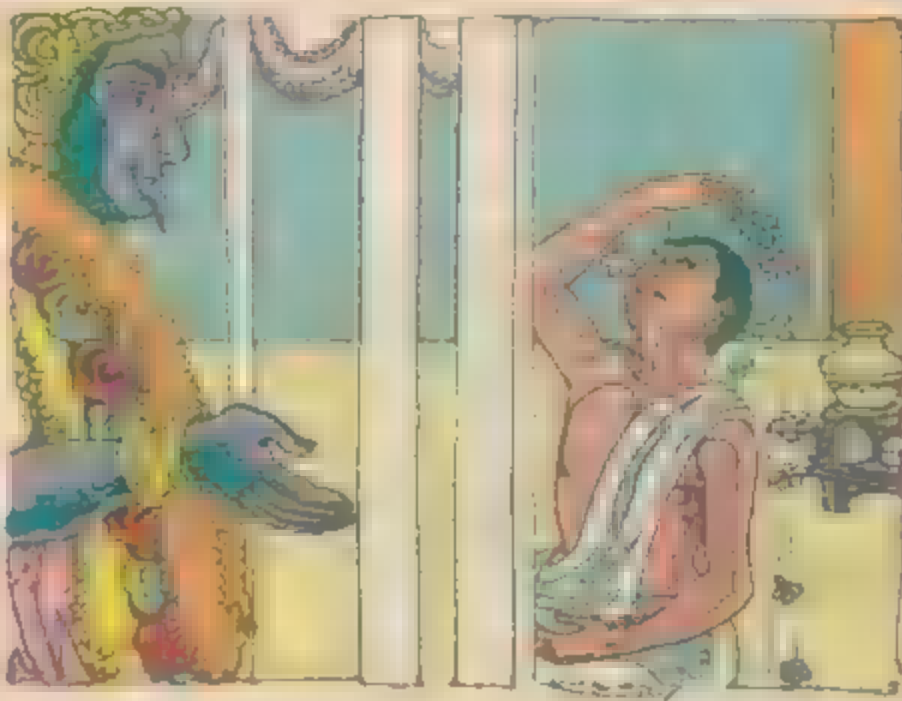
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. A faith which teaches unity of all religions, peace and love, founded in Iran by Bahauallah (1817-92).
2. In New Delhi.
3. Kenneth Arnold, ■ American pilot.
4. In June 1947.

5. Because Mr. Arnold said that they flew as saucers would move when hurled across the surface of waters.

LITERATURE

1. Daniel Defoe (1661-1731).
2. Robinson Crusoe.
3. Based ■ facts.
4. Alexander Selkirk, a mariner.
5. Toru Dutt.



SRI

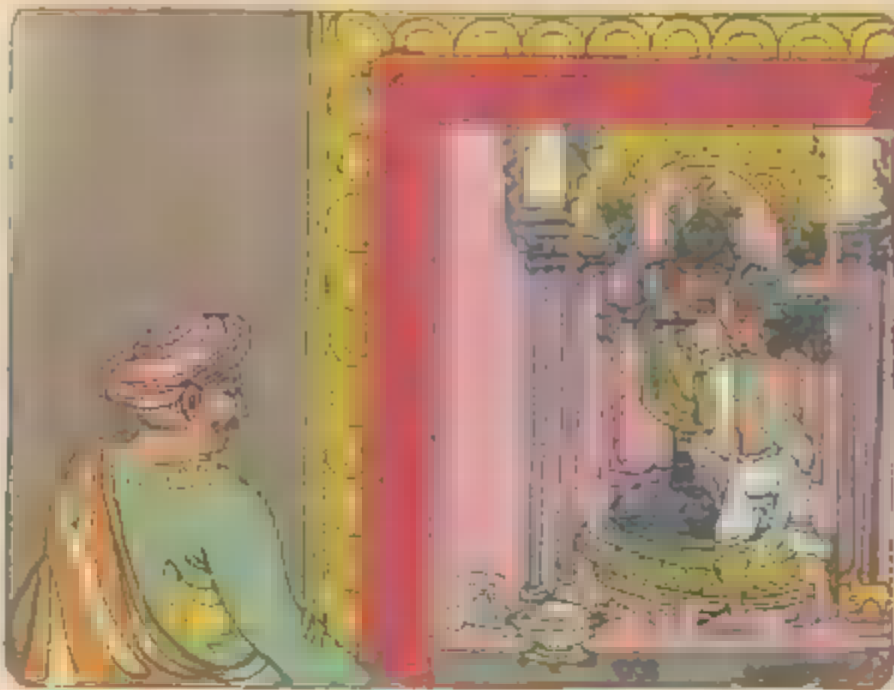
(3)

Gadadhar, while performing the rites before the deity, became
 with the deity. So much so
 that instead of offering flowers to
 the goddess, he adorned himself
 with them.

Sometimes, deep in the night, he
 was found seated under a tree on
 the river, lost in meditation. No
 wonder that the temple-
 attendants took him to be crazy!

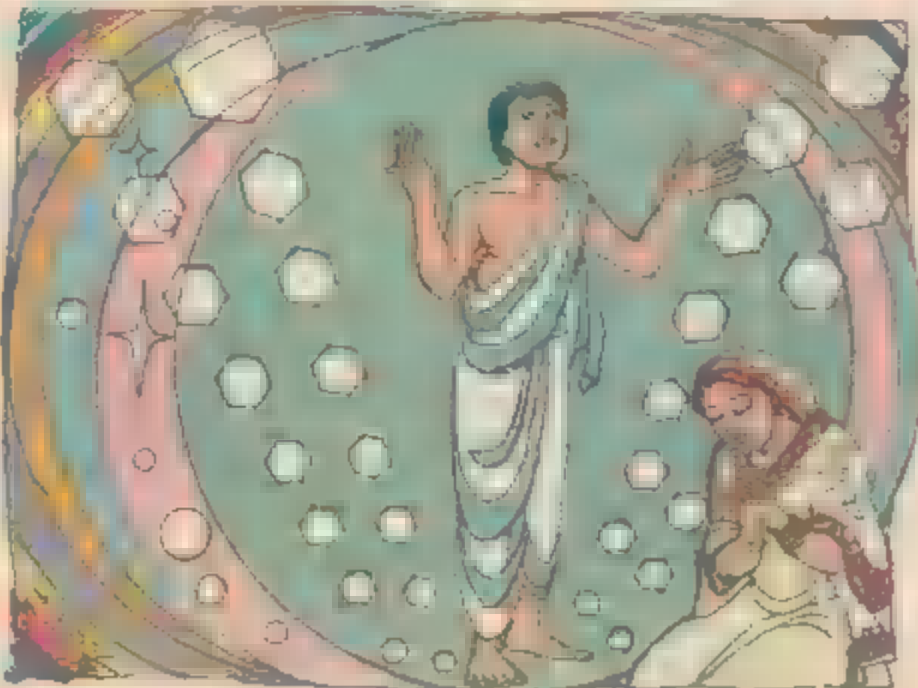


Mathuranath, the son-in-law of
 Rani Rasmoni and her heir-
 apparent, was reported about
 the priest's strange conduct. He
 felt disturbed, but decided to
 inquire into the allegations
 himself.



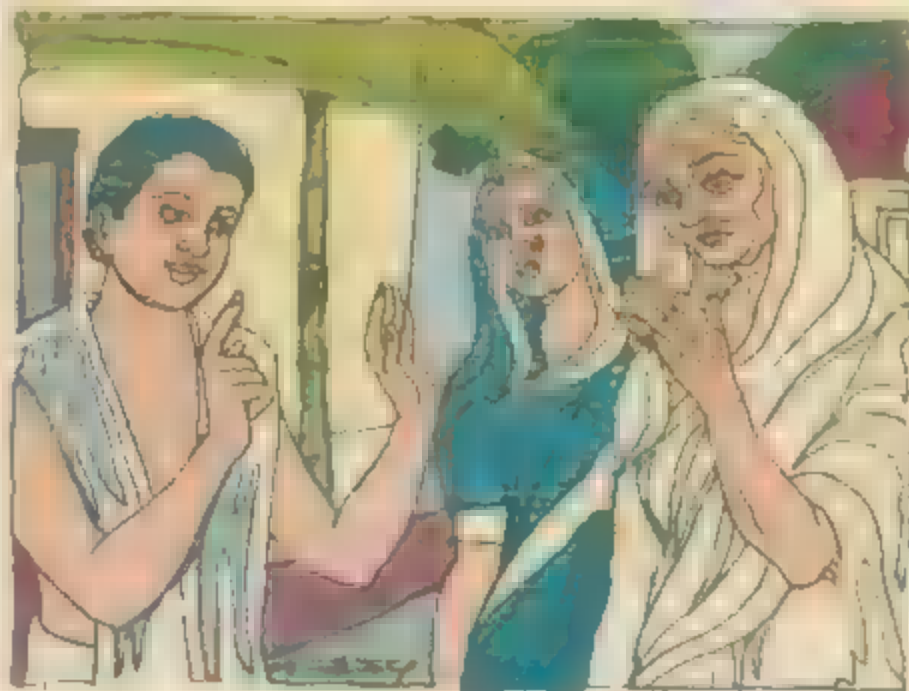
One day he came to the temple and peeped into it. He saw Gadadhar trying to push the food-offerings into the deity's mouth, exhorting Her to eat, as though the idol was a living being! Mathuranath realised the intensity of the priest's devotion

One day, on a visit to the temple, Rani Rasmoni sat listening to Gadadhar's devotional songs. But her thoughts went to some litigation in the court. Suddenly Gadadhar slapped her and shouted, "Must you think of those filthy things even now?"



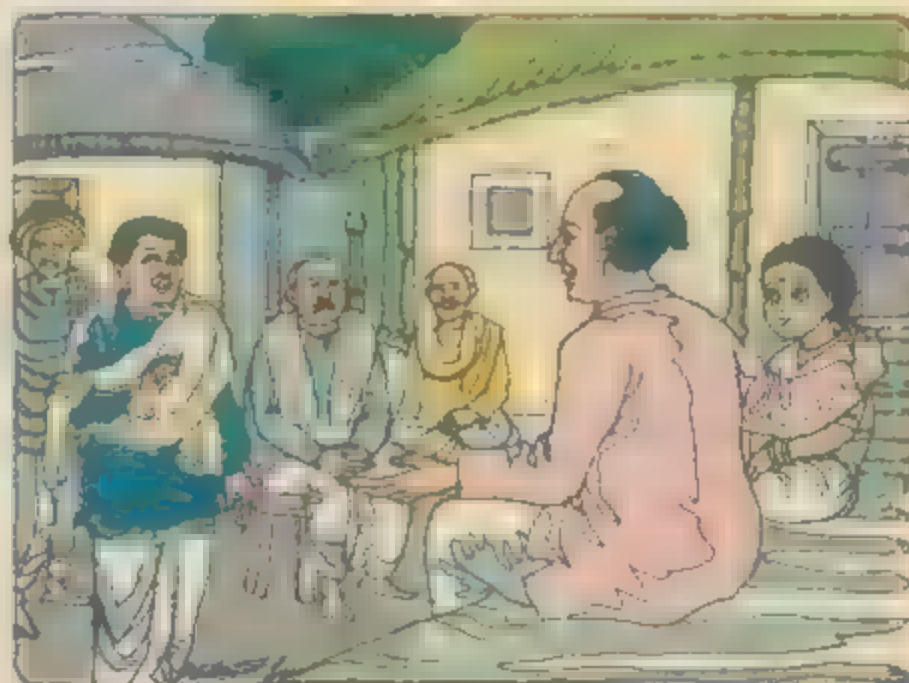
The Rani's officials were agitated. They would have punished Gadadhar, but the Rani intervened. She alone knew that the priest had every right to take her to task. He had the strange power to read her thoughts.

Gadadhar had several strange experiences at this stage. Once he saw a little demon coming out of his body followed by a luminous young ascetic who looked like Lord Shiva. The ascetic struck the demon with a trident. The demon dissolved. Gadadhar knew that all that was impure in him was destroyed.



Meanwhile Gadadhar's mother was anxious to see her son married. Her relatives kept searching for a suitable bride. Suddenly Gadadhar said, "My bride is growing up at Jairambati, in the household of Ramchandra Mukhopadhyay!"

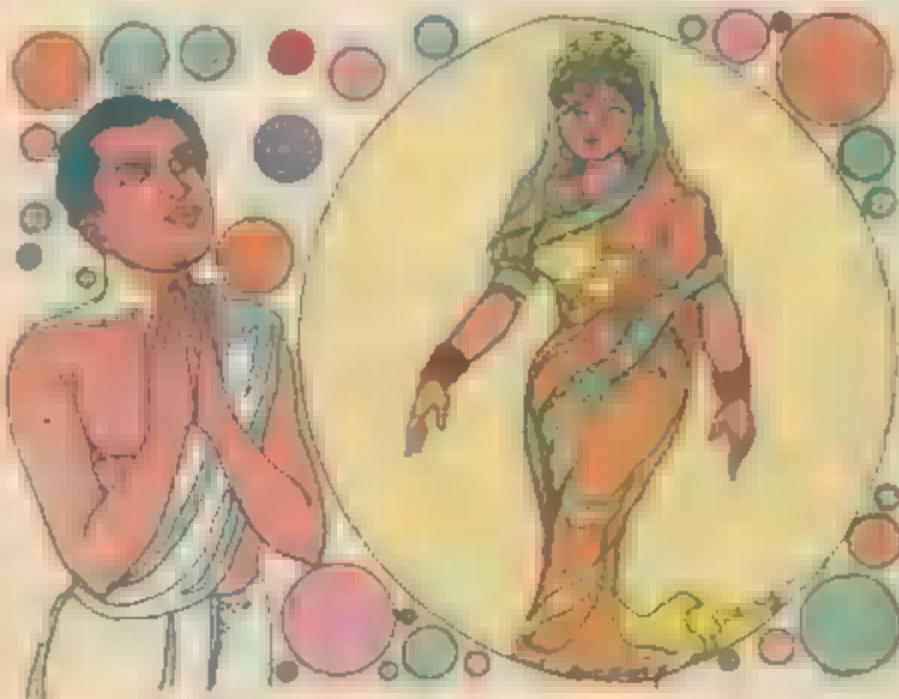
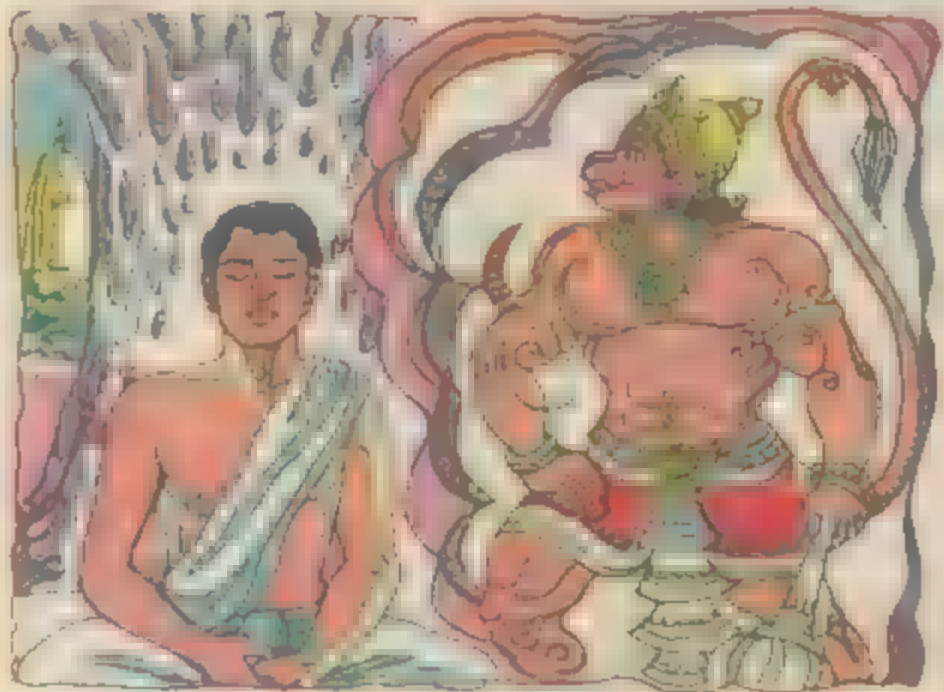
Nobody knew what made him say so. He had never been to Jairambati. However, following his advice, his mother's people located the house and saw that Mukhopadhyay had a small daughter. The marriage was finalised.





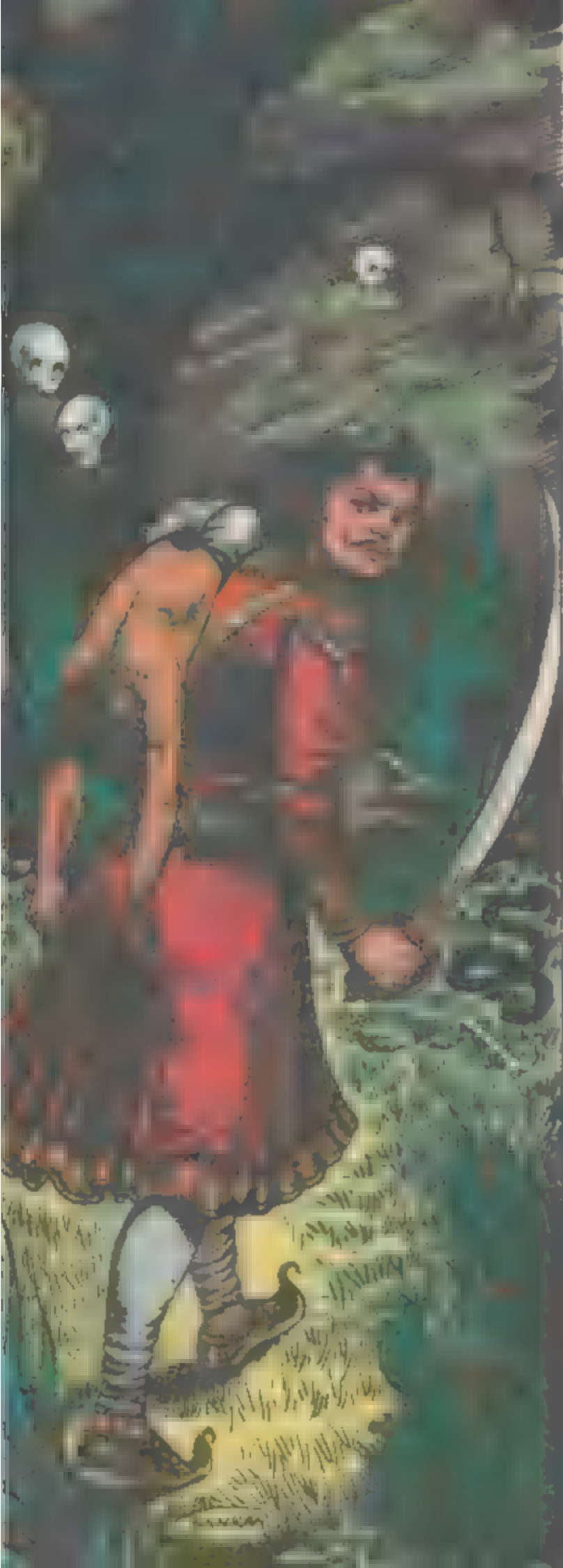
The wedding was performed. With a child-like curiosity, Gadadhar went through the rituals. The baby bride, Sharadmoni, was as sweet by nature as she was serene and charming to look at.

Back in the temple, Gadadhar was engrossed in his Sadhana once again. He began to meditate on Hanuman, the exemplary devotee, in order to experience the delight of total devotion to the Lord.



One day he saw a beautiful, divine-looking lady coming towards him. After a little reflection, he realised that she was none other than Mother Sita. She came closer and merged in him.

—To continue



New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

THE KING AND THE CHIEFTAIN

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At intervals between the roars of thunder and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree again and brought the corpse down. However, as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, you were wandering in the cremation ground night after night. As a result of this, you must be sleeping during the day. Who is looking after the affairs of the state? I am sure, you have appointed efficient officers to take care of the administration. But is it proper to fully depend on them? Would they not misuse their power and position? I know of a king who had done a similar thing. Let me tell his experiences to you. Pay attention



to my narration. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: A century ago there was a king named Viswajit who ruled over the kingdom of Chandralaya. He was honest and brave. He wanted to keep his subjects in as much happiness as possible.

The frontiers of his kingdom were full of hills and forests. It was not possible to govern these areas from the capital of Chandralaya. King Viswajit appointed four chieftains to govern four different divisions of the frontiers. These chieftains were given full powers to make laws and rule the ~~areas~~ in the way they liked.

Years passed. The king was

satisfied that everything was all right. But one day a man from Rudrapur, one of the four divisions in the frontiers met him. "My lord," he said, "my name is Bhushan. May I be pardoned for my audacity. But I must report to you that the chieftain of Rudrapur, Jaikant, is a corrupt man. The people are most unhappy under his rule. You must punish him and appoint a new chieftain over the division."

The king was surprised and a bit annoyed. Jaikant was earlier serving in the court as a senior officer. The king had found him to be most efficient. How can such allegations be brought against him? At the same time he could not dismiss the allegations as false, because Bhushan spoke with great force. He seemed to be honest and frank.

"How did you know that Jaikant is corrupt?" the king asked Bhushan.

"My lord, at the beginning he meant to be a good ruler. He took me into confidence and asked me to make a list of the most dishonest traders in the division. I took much pains in keeping a careful eye on the traders and spent money on private detectives and then made a list of five

traders who adulterated food, used false weight and measure and smuggled or suppressed goods. I handed over the list to him with the hope that he would punish them. But God alone knows what transpired between them and the chieftain. They went scot-free. They ridiculed me and insulted me," said Bhushan.

"I see. But why did you take such pains at the chieftain's bidding?" asked the king.

"For the sake of ideal administration, my lord! I was under the impression that Jaikant, the chieftain, was really a good man and he wanted to root out corruption," answered Bhushan.

"Are you prepared to repeat your allegations in Jaikant's presence?" asked the king.

"My lord, that would be a risky thing to do, unless you dismiss him. However, I am prepared to do that," said Bhushan.

The king proceeded to Rudrapur. It was announced that whoever had any grievance against the chieftain should meet him. Nobody came during the first few days. Then the king's announcement was repeated and it was also added that whoever wished could meet the king in



private and talk to him in private.

One by one the people began to meet the king. One of them said that the chieftain demanded and took a hundred gold coins from him because he took the contract to dig a pond for the villagers. Another said that the chieftain took fifty gold coins from him in order to give his son a job, so on and so forth. The king told them curtly, "You don't deserve any sympathy."

The king then summoned the chieftain and said, "There are serious allegations of corruption against you. What have you to say to it?"

"My lord, give me a year more. You will hear no charges against



me!" appealed the chieftain.

"Let it be so," said the king. A year passed. The king visited Rudrapur once again. The people were asked to meet him, if they had any grievances. But nobody came with any complaint. On the other hand some new people met the king and praised Jaikant. The king looked for Bhushan. He had left Rudrapur and was residing in another division. The king's messengers brought him back to Rudrapur.

It was the day for the king to leave Rudrapur. Jaikant was happy that nobody had complained against him. But, to his great shock, the king put him under arrest and confiscated his

property. He appointed Bhushan as the chieftain of Rudrapur. He also announced that thereafter nobody would be the permanent chieftain over a division. They would be transferred from division to division. The king was to tour the divisions annually.

The vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone, "O King, I have some doubts. Why did the king, instead of punishing Jaikant immediately, allow him, to rule as the chieftain for yet another year? Why did he tell those who complained against Jaikant that they did not deserve any sympathy? Why did he punish Jaikant when there was no complaint against him? Instead of merely dismissing him, why did he arrest him and why did he forfeit his property? Bhushan was not the only one to complain against Jaikant. Instead of choosing anyone else, why did he choose him to the post? Why did he make the post transferable? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

Forthwith answered King Vikram, "King Viswajit was a wise

man. He knew that there were very few people who did not grow proud and corrupt when in power for a long time. At the same time he believed that everyone had the capacity to change. The king could have dismissed Jaikant, but it was not easy to get efficient officers. He expected Jaikant to change. So, he gave him a chance. Surely, the king did not sit quiet thereafter. He must have set his spies to find out whether Jaikant had changed or not. Unfortunately, Jaikant must have changed for the worse. That is to say, he must have threatened those who spoke against him with dire consequences. That is why nobody came to complain against him. The king had wanted to hear complaints, not praise. If some men turned up to sing the chieftain's praise, it is clear that the chieftain himself had sent them.

"As Jaikant misused his position and did not change even after a chance was given to him, he was severely punished.

"The king was justified in telling the people that they did not deserve any sympathy. It was because nobody could have compelled them to bribe the chieftain. It is their readiness to bribe the chieftain that made him a corrupt officer.

"The king chose Bhushan to the post because Bhushan was the only man who had the courage to speak against Jaikant, risking his safety. Also, Bhushan loved the people and he was an idealist. The king made the post transferable because that was one of the ways to keep a check on the chieftains."

No sooner had the king concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



WORLD IN NATURE

THE PETRIFIED FOREST IN ARIZONA, USA, IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST COLLECTION OF FOSSILISED WOOD. IT ORIGINATED 200 MILLION YEARS AGO WHEN 200 FT (60 M) TALL TREES WERE TOPPLED BY STORMS AND BECAME COVERED IN DEPOSITS OF MUD AND SAND, WHICH LATER HARDENED INTO SHALE AND SANDSTONE. SILICA FROM VOLCANIC ASH PENETRATED THE BURIED LOGS.

ABOUT 70 MILLION YEARS AGO THE LAND BEGAN TO RISE AND THE COVERING ROCKS GRADUALLY STRIPPED AWAY REVEALING

Petrified Forest



THE LOGS WE SEE TODAY. SOME ARE AS MUCH 100 FT (30 M) LONG.

MOUNT EREBUS



THE MOST SOUTHERLY ACTIVE VOLCANO IS MOUNT EREBUS IN ANTARCTICA—(77° 35'S). IT IS 12,450 FT (3,795 M) HIGH, WITH A CRATER 2,600 FT (800 M) IN DIAMETER.

The SENSITIVE Plant



MIMOSA PUDICA IS BETTER KNOWN AS THE SENSITIVE PLANT. WHEN A LEAF IS TOUCHED THE WHOLE PLANT APPEARS TO WILT IN SECONDS. LATER THE PLANT RETURNS TO NORMAL.

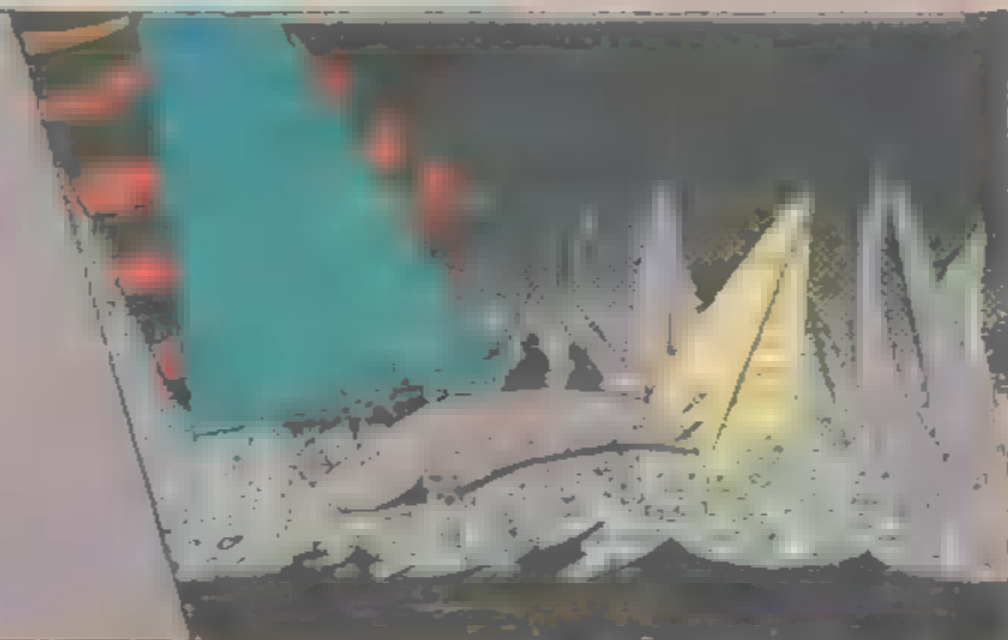


THREE IN A ROW

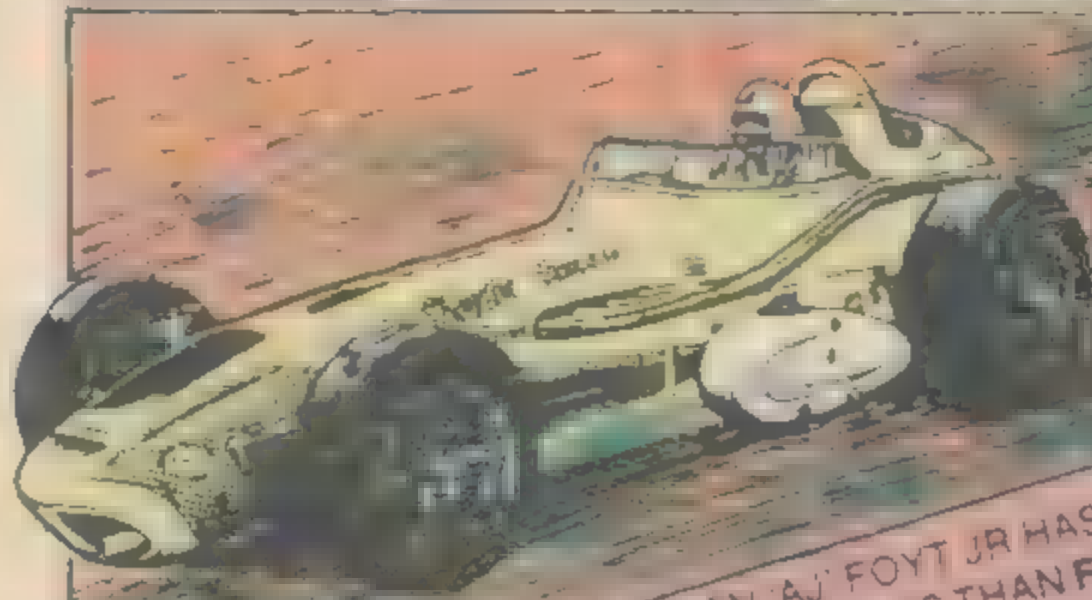
BRITAIN'S FRED PERRY WAS THE FIRST MAN TO WIN THE WIMBLEDON SINGLES TITLE THREE YEARS IN SUCCESSION— 1934, 1935 AND 1936

DISASTER RACE

NEARLY A QUARTER OF THE 303 YACHTS TAKING PART IN THE 1979 600-MILE FAST NET RACE CAPSIZED IN A STORM. FIFTEEN LIVES WERE LOST.



INDY- FOUR TIMES



TEXAN AJ FOYT JR HAS WON THE INDIANAPOLIS 500 NO LESS THAN FOUR TIMES—1961, 1964, 1967 AND 1977

TALES FROM MANY LANDS (KOREA)

How The Hungry Man Was Discovered

There were some mountains on the outskirts of the village Lu, covered as well surrounded by forests. Neither the mountains very high, nor were the forests very thick. And, in the whole forest, there only one tiger.

It was not a big tiger and it did not remember how it came to live there. But it was there and the villagers knew that it was there. Sometimes the tiger chose the tallest mountain to stand upon that the villagers could see it. It

knew that everybody feared it. Well, he relished his position.

If a villager saw that one of his sheep had not returned home, he did not go to look for it. "After all, the tiger is known to attack any villager. Let him eat the sheep!" That is how people viewed the situation.

Yes, the tiger had never tasted a and that was its great regret. At least once in life it must eat a human being! But it never got a chance for doing so. The fact is, it was also a bit uncertain



about men. Who knows how much strength ■ man possessed?

Once it rained for four days, almost continuously. The tiger was not lucky enough to catch anything during the period. It was awfully hungry. As the rains stopped on the fifth day, the tiger climbed down the hill and headed towards the village, taking very careful steps. It was of course evening and the darkness was setting in quite fast.

The first house in the village, when one approached it from the forest, belonged to ■ man who was away in the town on business. His wife and his little son were there. It was a solitary house, cut off from the rest of the village. "I hope, I can drag someone from this house and fulfil my long-cherished desire!" the tiger thought as it inched towards the window of the house.

Inside the house the little boy was crying. "Be silent," said his mother, "don't you know that there is ■ jackal outside the door?"

But the little one continued to cry.

"There—this time a big wolf is there outside! You must stop crying!"

But the boy did not pay any



heed to her warning.

"I ■ sure, there is ■ bear now!" said the mother.

This too had no effect on the boy.

"Look here, my child! The tiger—yes—none other than the tiger—is there, just outside the window. You must stop wailing!" said the mother.

Even then the boy went on wailing.

The tiger who overheard the words felt both uncomfortable and offended; uncomfortable because the lady had already known about its presence; offended because the child did not show any sign of fear for it—



the only tiger in the region!

It so happened that in the village there was ■ poor man called Ah and he too had gone without food, if not for four days, for a full day. He was awfully hungry. That evening the villagers had gathered before the shrine of the Buddha for witnessing ■ ritual dance. Ah thought that it was an opportune moment for him to enter some kitchen and steal some food.

Which house to enter? He too had selected this solitary house. But he could not enter it because the door was locked from inside. He knew that the lady made delicious cakes and kept them in

■ pot hanging from the roof. He had climbed to the roof-top in order to dig through the thatch and pull out the hanging pot.

While he was waiting atop the roof, the lady told her son, "You won't stop crying until I bring it down from the roof, is that so? All right, be silent!"

As soon as the little boy was promised the cake, he fell silent!

Now, this created problems for two creatures—the tiger and Ah! The tiger wondered, "Who is that creature on the roof? It must be a terrible thing! The boy who did not stop crying even when his mother drew his attention to me, at once fell silent in fear of the thing from the roof!"

Ah thought that the lady had already found him out! He was not ■ seasoned thief. He got terrified. At once he jumped down and fell on the tiger. He sat up on its back thinking that it was some domestic animal.

The tiger got the shock of its life. "So, the terrible creature has descended from the roof!" It told itself and ran.

Unfamiliar with the village, the nervous tiger ran straight towards the Buddha shrine—and ran through the crowd which parted in panic. For the villagers,

it was an unbelievable sight. Who knew that the poor Ah would one day sit on a tiger and ride across the village? The crowd stood stupefied and when the tiger, along with Ah, was gone, it burst into cries of surprise!

It did not take long for Ah to realise on what he sat! He knew that he would soon faint. However as the tiger came under a tree, Ah caught hold of its lower branch and remained hanging, while the tiger continued to run. It left the hills and the forests near the village Lu and stopped only after reaching a bigger forest. Never again it came back to its old habitation.

After half an hour Ah came back in the village, to a prolonged applause from the villagers. Soon he knew what the villagers thought of him!

"Indeed, it is not easy to scare a

tiger!" he said. "When I found the tiger and knew that it intended to eat up everyone of our folks, I decided to teach it a lesson!"

"You are the bravest man in Korea!" said the village chieftain.

"But I am hungry," said Ah.

At once a dozen dishes were brought for Ah from different households, portions from the most delicious items cooked in different kitchens! And every day he was invited by different families to eat and narrate to them the story of his encounter with the tiger.

Soon the king was notified about the bravest man in Korea. Ah got a regular monthly allowance which enabled him to eat five meals a day!

—Retold by Vindusar

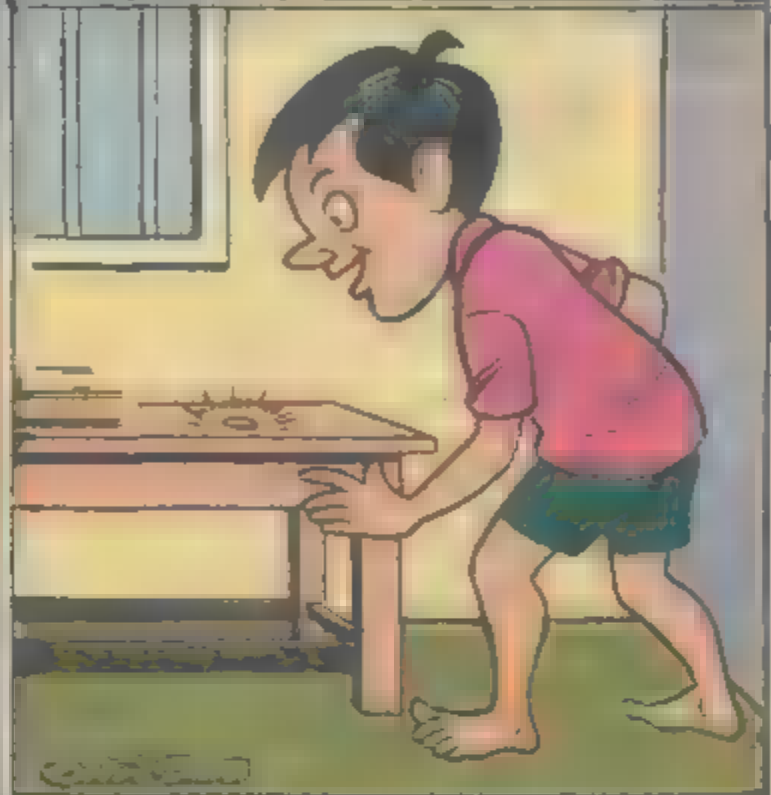


THE EDUCATED FRIENDS



Kimpu and Binglu were cousins. They were of wealthy parents and began learning to read and write rather late.

"My boys, you must put on your reading and writing!" the teacher told them. Soon thereafter Kimpu found a silver coin on his mother's table.



A little later Binglu comes into the garden and sees the notice. He digs and finds the coin and is happy.



He buried it in the garden and decided to put his learning to use. So, he put up a small signboard on the spot, saying "Kimpu has not buried any coin here!"

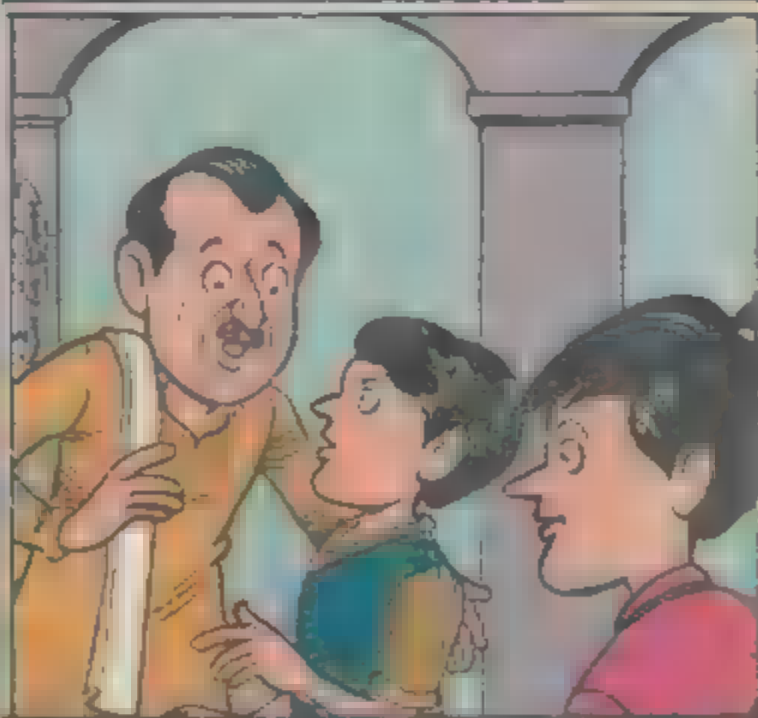
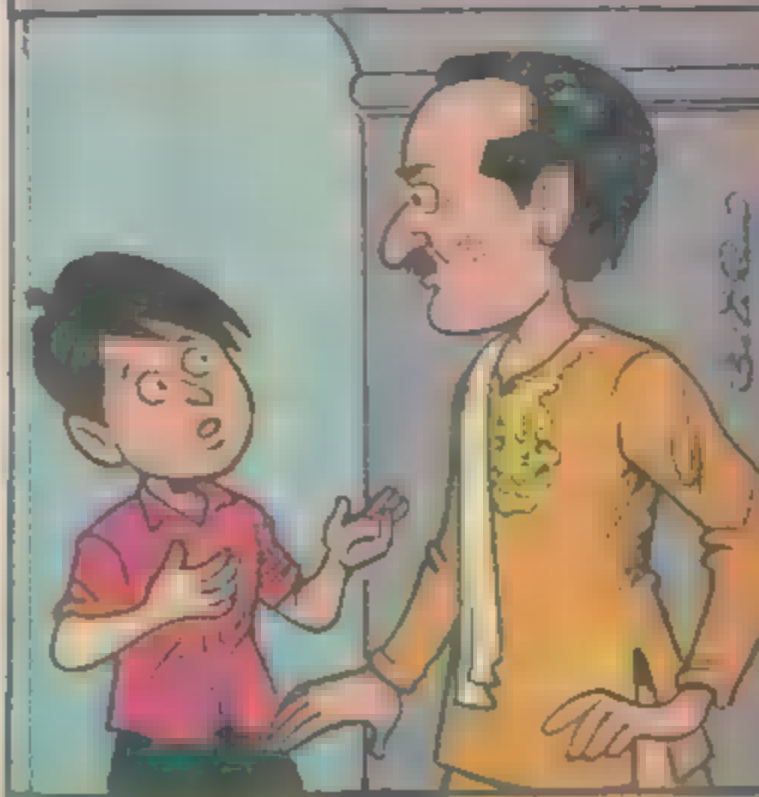


Kimpu too must put his learning to use. So, he wrote out a notice which read: "Binglu did not take the coin!" He fixed it to a stick on the ground.



An hour later Kimpu came to look for his coin. He was surprised to see the new notice. He dug at the spot and found no coin.

Kimpu ran to his teacher and reported the matter and concluded, "But Binglu did not take it, for there is a notice to the effect!"



The teacher, of course knew the truth. He made Binglu return Kimpu's coin and made Kimpu return it to his mother and said, "You must use your learning—but with wisdom!"

A KING'S PRAYER

David, the legendary king of Israel who lived some three thousand years ago, was once out on a war. When he returned to his capital, Jerusalem, he found a child of his critically ill. The king was tired, even so he did not go to take rest; he was hungry, even so he refused to dine. He knelt down on the floor near the child's bed and closed his eyes in prayer.

The physicians who were attending on the child grew very anxious to see that the child

recovered soon so that the king could relax. The best possible treatment was given to the patient; medicines were secured from far and near. Not a moment passed without some doctors and nurses leaning over the child and recording its condition.

Meanwhile the king sat like a statue.

But, despite all the attention given to the child, its condition deteriorated. And, on the second day after the king's return, the



child died.

Nobody dared to cry aloud lest the king should be disturbed. At the same time they knew that the king had to be informed sooner or later. But everybody was afraid of his reaction. If he had been so upset to see the child sick, how much upset he would be to know that it was dead!

Members of the royal family and the physicians and the attendants did not know what to do. But the queen could not keep her sorrow suppressed for long. She burst out into a wail.

The king opened his eyes. Then he stood up; then he went near the dead child and looked at it and asked the doctors, "How is the patient?"

"Dead, my lord," answered the chief physician.

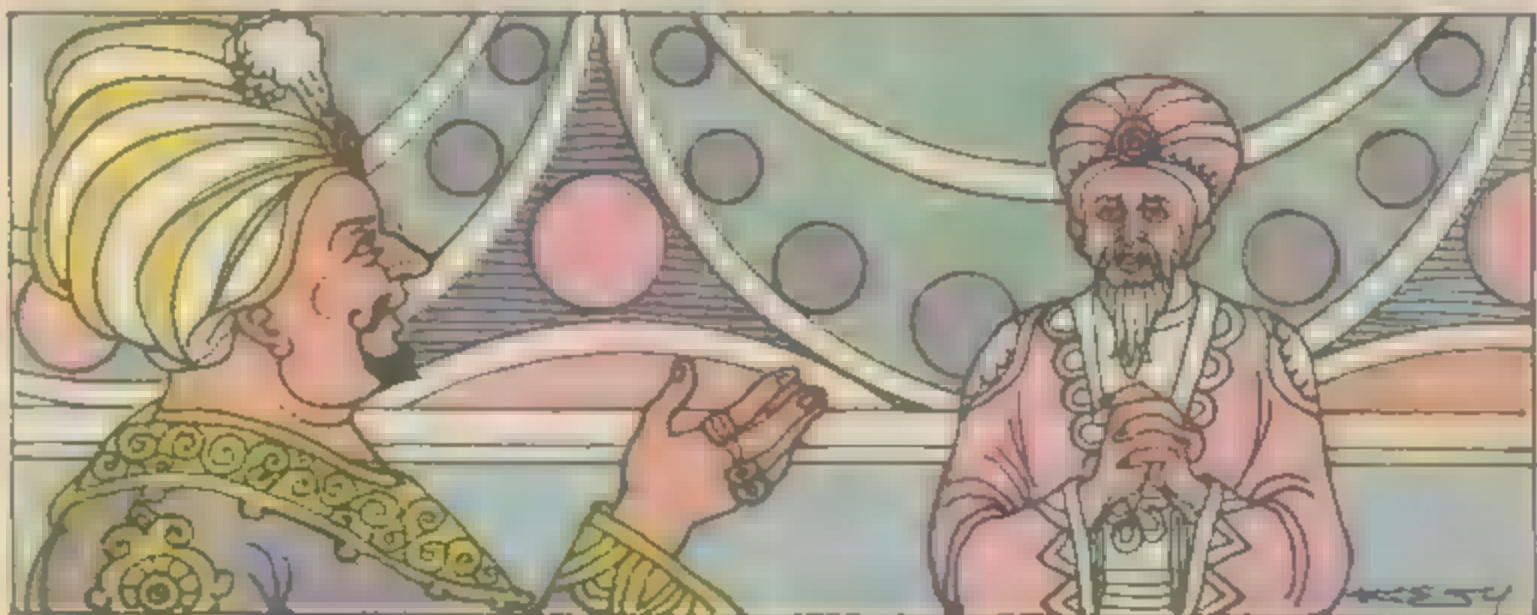
"Is that so?" said the king.

"Why not arrange for its last rites?"

Then he went into his apartment and asked his attendants to lay dinner for him. Soon he finished taking bath and sat down to eat. While eating he discussed with his ministers the problems of his kingdom.

At last a friendly minister said, "My lord, we thought that you would go mad with sorrow when you learnt about your child's death, for you were so upset with its sickness!"

"My friend," said the king. "I was never upset. I prayed to the Lord that the best be done. I did not pray for the child's recovery. Who am I to decide what is good for the child's spirit—to remain in this body or to leave this body? When I learnt that the Lord had decided, I had nothing more to do in that matter!"





THE ROOT CAUSE

In days gone by the zamindar ■ the landlord of a village was practically the owner of the village. Be it legal or illegal, if he asked someone to leave the village, the man had to leave. He could take away agricultural lands from one man and give them to another. If he got angry with anyone, he could deprive him of the services of the priest, the washerman and the barber.

Raj Rao, the landlord of the village Hillol, had only one child, ■ daughter. When the girl was very young, he performed her marriage with ■ handsome boy, Kamal Kishore. Since Raj Rao had no son, Kamal Kishore came to live with him, to inherit his property in the future.

Soon Raj Rao realised that he had not made a very wise choice. The teachers he appointed to teach the boy told him that

Kamal Kishore was too innocent to be taught anything. The expert he appointed to teach Kamal Kishore horse-riding, told him that the boy was too tender to go through hardship. The manager of the estate who was to train the boy in supervising accounts told him that Kamal Kishore's mind was too green for dry calculations!

Raj Rao understood that what they meant to say was, Kamal Kishore was foolish and inefficient. But there was nothing that could be done to remedy the situation except to hope that the boy would grow intelligent.

Raj Rao never lost an opportunity to advise the boy on different issues. But his efforts went in vain.

Old and ill, Raj Rao took to bed. He called his son-in-law and said, "My boy, remember four

things. First, never conclude anything hastily. Second thing you should remember is, it is always good to go to the root of a problem. Here comes the third important thing. Always follow different lines of thought and not merely one line. The fourth thing to remember is, once you have traced the root of a problem, don't leave it, but uproot it!"

In a few days thereafter Raj Rao died. The young Kamal Kishore became the new landlord. And the people of the village Hillol still talk about the first and the last problem he solved for them!

It happened like this. One day a goat of Vimal's ate up a creeper that had grown on the gate of Mukund's house. That was a medicinal plant and Mukund had nurtured it with great care over a period of six months. Just when it was time to pluck its leaves and prepare the medicine, it went into a goat's tummy!

Mukund was furious. He did something which he should have never done. He hurled a hatchet at the goat. It struck the creature on its head and killed it.

Mukund was very sorry to see the outcome of his impulsive action. He reported the matter to



Vimal and was willing to pay for the goat. But Vimal was crooked by nature. "This was a very special goat. I had bought it from a distant market for a hundred rupees. I must have spent another hundred rupees on it. Add to that the value of my anguish over its death which also comes to a hundred rupees. So, you must pay me three hundred rupees," said Vimal.

In those days a goat never cost more than three rupees. Mukund could never pay three hundred rupees unless he sold a part of his property. They quarrelled. The dispute was reported to the new landlord, Kamal Kishore:



"We should not come to any conclusion hastily. We must go to the root of the problem, think along different lines and then root out the problem. Well, Mukund, the problem is very clear. It is the death of a valuable goat. Now, had you hurled a stick at it instead of a hatchet, it would not have died. So the root cause is the hatchet. Now, the fellow who sold you the hatchet should pay the penalty. Who is he?" asked Kamal Kishore.

"Sir, it is not possible to find him out. Once on a visit to the town, I bought it from a fellow who was hawking such items. I have not seen him again," said

Mukund.

"That means one line is closed. We must think along some other lines. Now, had the creeper not been there, the goat would not have been killed. Now, Mukund, why did you plant that creeper?" demanded Kamal Kishore.

"Sir, it was a medicinal plant, given to me by the physician, Ram Shastri," replied Mukund.

"I see! So, it is Ram Shastri who is to blame. I don't see why he should not be punished. Call him!" ordered the landlord.

Ram Shastri was duly summoned. The new landlord looked at him with kindness, but said, "Shastri, I am sorry for you. But you have to pay three hundred rupees to Vimal!"

"Is that so?" said Shastri. "How much I regret having come to this village and settled down here!"

"Indeed, you have raised a very basic question. Why did you come and settle down here? In the answer to this question lies the root cause of the problem!" observed Kamal Kishore, beginning to see a new ray of light.

"Sir, it is the late pious Raj Rao—his soul be in peace—who invited me and made me settle down here, because there was not

a single physician in this village!" said Shastri, heaving a sigh.

"Good God! If my father-in-law was the root cause of the problem, I ought to pay the penalty!" said Kamal Kishore pensively.

Shastri was moved to pity. He said, "Sir, there is yet another line which can be pursued for a solution to the problem?"

"Is there one? What is that?" asked Kamal Kishore enthusiastically.

"Vimal claims that his was a special goat. Very well. Now, the creeper which the goat ate up was a special plant, of great medicinal value, obtained from the Vindhya mountains. Now, sir, is there anything surprising in ■ special goat feeling attracted towards ■ special plant?" asked Shastri, pausing for a reply.

"Nothing surprising!" agreed

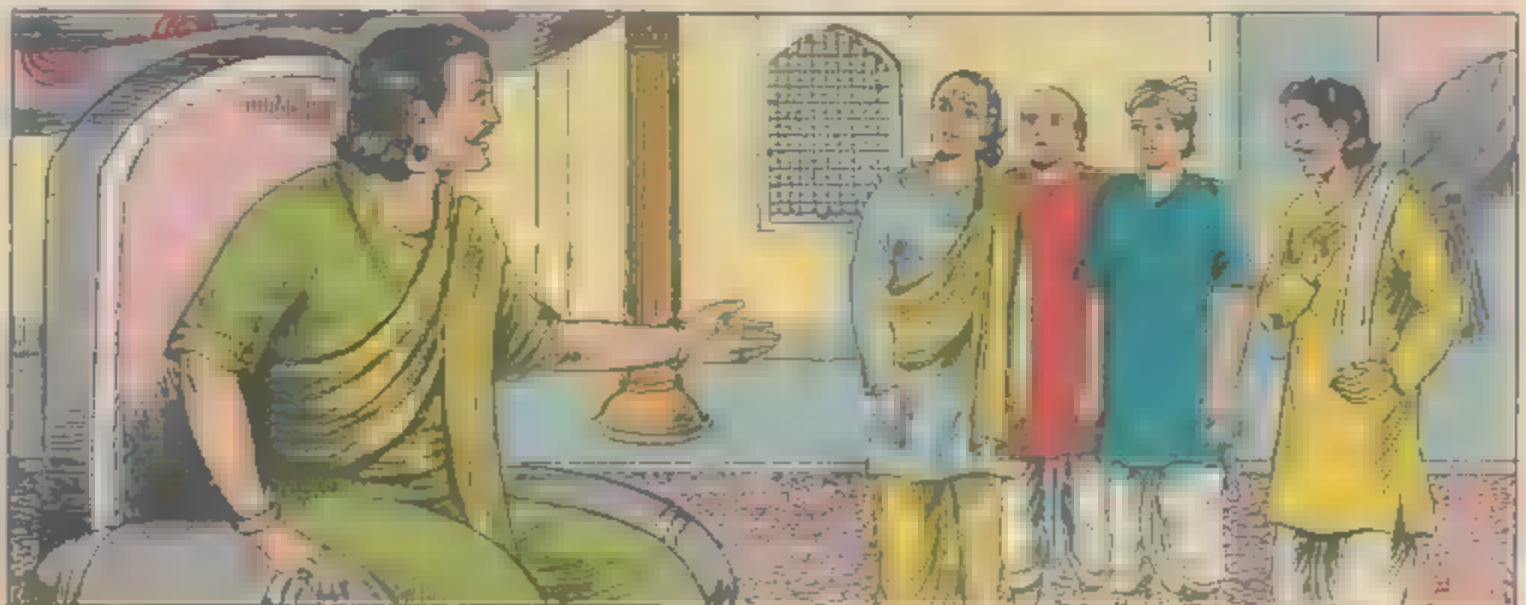
the landlord.

"So, a special goat ate up a special plant. Now there is neither the plant nor the goat. Both are gone. That is to say, the problem too is gone!" said Shastri.

"Correct!" exclaimed Kamal Kishore. "It is gone. Now, go away, Mukund and Vimal. But, Shastri please stay back!"

Mukund left happily and Vimal left with a heavy face. Then, looking at Shastri, Kamal Kishore said, "I have ■ request to make. Henceforth, while continuing to be a physician, you should also help me in judging cases, finding solutions to problems!"

Shastri consented to do so. That was good for all the villagers.





LET US KNOW

In the General Knowledge Supplement in the March '90 issue, the *Mahabharata* was referred to as the world's longest work of poetry. But is it not Sri Aurobindo's epic *Savitri* which is the longest?

—Sardar Iqbal Singh, Warangal

The epic *Savitri* is the longest poem in English.

Who should be credited for the excavations at Mohenjo-daro?

—N. V. Rao, Hyderabad

The existence of the buried monuments was known for sometime. However, the person chiefly responsible for the excavations was Sir John Marshall.

Why is Jaipur called the Pink City?

—Lalitha V., Hosur

On the occasion of the visit of Prince Albert in 1875, the then Maharaja of Jaipur, Sawai Ram Singh, painted the market buildings in pink. Gradually, the pink became the characteristic colour of the city, and more buildings were coloured pink. The city, thus, came to be described as the Pink City.

Who invented Mathematics?

—Sudha E. Iyer, Bombay

Branches of knowledge developed over centuries of human civilization. No individual can be said to have invented any of them, though several geniuses have contributed to their growth.

DOT YOUR I'S AND CROSS YOUR T'S

To dot the i's and cross the t's (not 'cut' the t's—as the reader has written) means to be alert and meticulous in everything, particularly in things which might not appear to be important. This is the query from Jyotiranjana Biswal of Dhenkanal.

A. Neelam of Kakinada would like a few phrases to be explained.

To be in the red means to have drawn more money from the bank than one had deposited. In a loose way the phrase also means to go bankrupt.

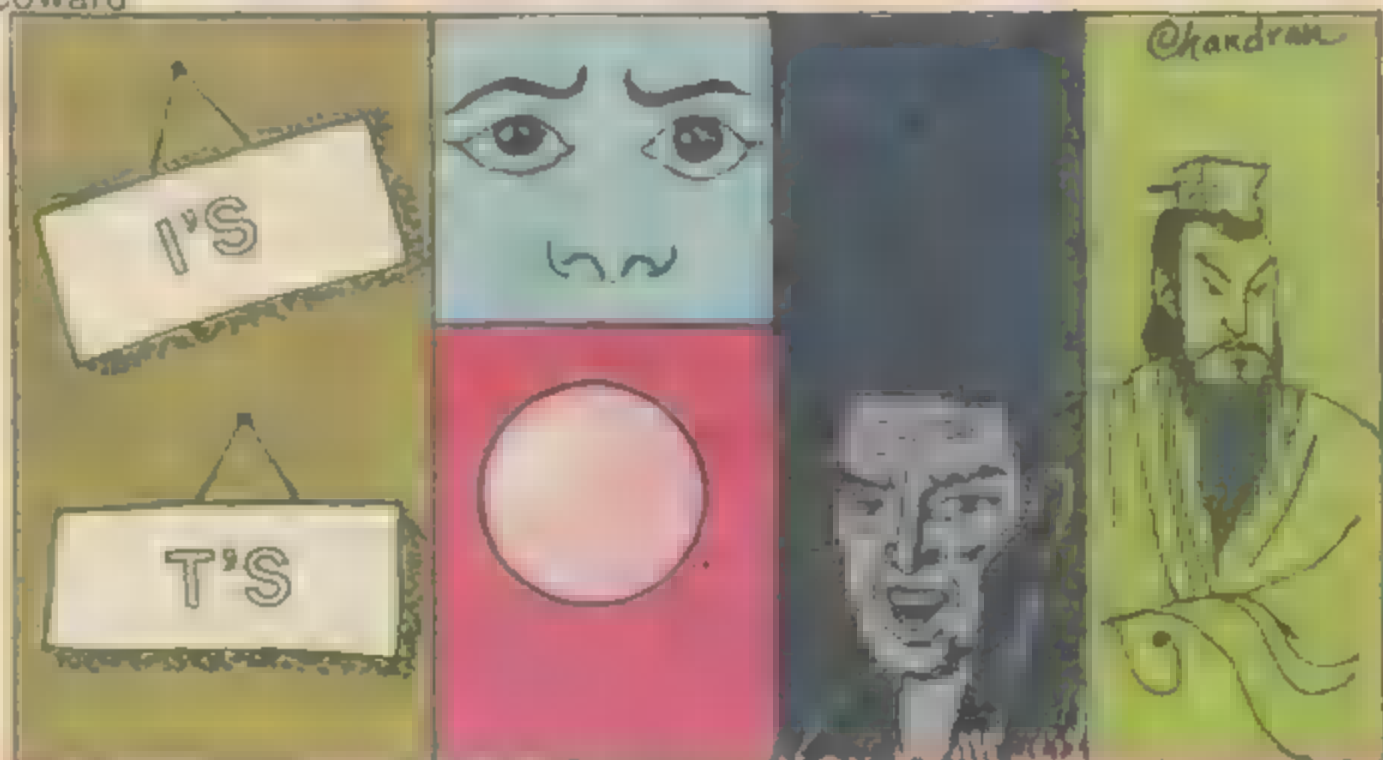
To see red means to get angry all on a sudden. "The moment Shyam Babu learnt that his car had been slapped, he saw red."

To look blue means to feel depressed. The phrase once in a blue moon means very rarely. "Although they lived in the same building complex, they met only once in a blue moon."

Born in the purple means a prince or anyone born in a family of high rank. The private room of the ancient Byzantine Queens was studded with purple gems. Hence the child born to the queen was born in the purple!

Black in the face means extremely angry.

The yellow may mean more than one thing, depending on the context, apart from its usual meaning, relating to colour. The word may refer to a Chinese or a Japanese (marked by yellowish skin) or a coward. "Don't think that X is yellow!" That means, X should not be thought to be a coward.



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WISDOM FROM THE WISE

When we look at what we want and then compare that with what we have, we shall be unhappy. When we think of what we deserve, then of what we have, we shall thank God.

— *Viscount Castlerosse*

The difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter.

— *George Gritter*

Hasty climbers have sudden falls.

— *English Proverb*



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